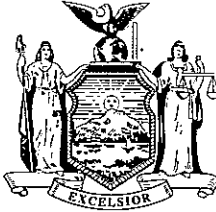


THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



**JAMES L. SEWARD**

SENATOR, 51ST DISTRICT

January 27, 2016

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CHAIRMAN  
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Mr. Jerry Boone, Commissioner  
NYS Taxation and Finance  
Executive Offices, Bldg. 9  
State Campus  
Albany, NY 12227

Dear Commissioner Boone,

As the tax filing season commences, I am certain you and your staff are experiencing a substantial increase in your workload and I appreciate the important role your department fulfills and the long hours ahead.

I recently learned of the free tax assistance sites that are staffed by State Department of Taxation and Finance experts and was eager to share this information with my constituents. Unfortunately, while I represent a senate district that encompasses all or part of nine counties (approximately the size of the state of Connecticut); only find two of the 85 sites were located within its boundaries.

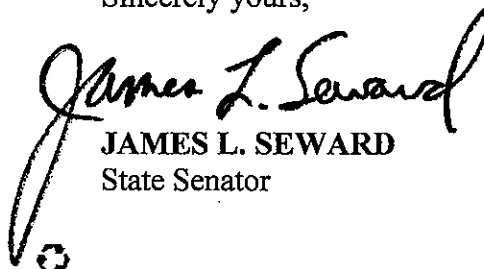
While I understand it would be difficult to staff free assistance sites in every municipality, it seems to me that there are vast portions of the state that are completely unserved. Many of the regions left without any free tax filing sites are rural, low-income areas exceedingly populated by people who are eligible for your help. In fact, the City of Oneonta, which was recently included on a list of ten upstate cities with the highest poverty rates in the state, seems like a natural for such a tax assistance site.

Further, as New York works to encourage more individuals to file their tax returns electronically it is these rural areas, where broadband internet service is sparse, that are in true need of assistance.

I commend you for expanding this free program in recent years, and hope that you look to continue the expansion in the future with an eye toward more geographic diversity. If I can be of assistance in pinpointing areas of particular need, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,

  
JAMES L. SEWARD  
State Senator

JLS:jb:jt