

Calling On The New York State Legislature To Cap Property Taxes

Legislator Roberti and Legislators Bischoff, Briggs, Cahill, Dart, Decker, Donaldson, Gregorius, Kraft, Lomita, Loughran, R.A. Parete, R.S. Parete, Provenzano, Rodriguez, Shapiro, Sheeley, Stoeckeler, Terpening and Zimet offer the following:

WHEREAS, according to the State Comptroller, property tax levies have increased by 60% from 1995 to 2005, and

WHEREAS, research done by the Tax Foundation shows that 9 out of 10 counties with the highest tax rates in the nation, where property taxes were measured as a percentage of home values, are located in Upstate New York, and

WHEREAS, according to the Empire Center, New York has experienced the largest population loss of any state since 2000, with over 1.2 million people moving to other states, and

WHEREAS, New York's high property tax burden, caused in great part by unfunded mandates, combined with rising energy and health care costs, is making it almost impossible for Ulster County residents to make ends meet and is chasing people and jobs out of Ulster County and the State, and

WHEREAS, immediate action must be taken by the state Legislature to reduce the property tax burden on all state residents in order to ensure that this, and future generations will be able to find a job and afford to raise a family in New York State, and

WHEREAS, property tax caps, which have been adopted in 14 states, have proven to be successful in lower property tax burdens, and

WHEREAS, in 1980, Massachusetts voters adopted "Prop 2 ½," which capped local and school district spending and property taxes, prevented the state Legislature from imposing unfunded state mandates, and provided a mechanism for voters to override the caps in cases of necessity, and

WHEREAS, when Prop 2 ½ was adopted, Massachusetts had one of the highest school property tax burdens in the nation--now it ranks 28th; Massachusetts has one of the top 5 education systems in the United States and has a 72% graduation rate--New York has a 56% graduation rate, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature must act at once in order to relieve the financial "squeeze," caused in great part by the State's high property tax burden being felt by families in Ulster County and across the State.

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature hereby calls on the New York State Legislature to immediately adopt legislation to cap local property taxes and

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prevent the State Legislature from imposing unfunded mandates on local municipalities, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Eliot Spitzer, New York State Comptroller's Office, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Senate Minority Leader Malcolm Smith, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader James N. Tedisco, New York State Senators John J. Bonacic and William J. Larkin, Jr., New York State Assemblymen Kevin A. Cahill, Clifford W. Crouch, Peter Lopez and Thomas Kirwan, and the New York State Association of Counties,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 31 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislators Decker and Maloney)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

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