

AN OPEN LETTER ON THE FY 2009 BUDGET TO GOVERNOR PATERSON, SPEAKER SILVER AND MAJORITY LEADER BRUNO

March 28, 2008

Dear Governor Paterson, Speaker Silver and Majority Leader Bruno:

We, the undersigned Chambers of Commerce representing business owners and entrepreneurs from every corner of New York State, are writing to urge you to pass a budget that will keep our state economically competitive by reducing spending and avoiding business-killing new taxes and fees. We are confident that New York can get back on the right fiscal track, but we simply cannot tax and spend our way out of these tough times.

With a stagnant, if not recessionary national economy, at least 25 states are projecting budget deficits, and that number is sure to grow. However, as they work up their budgets for the new fiscal year, many of these states are taking prudent but politically difficult steps to keep government spending in line with falling revenues.

Other states, such as New Jersey, California and Florida, are working to trim state spending significantly. However, here in New York, where we are facing a \$4.6 billion deficit, we have seen budget proposals that increase spending significantly. On top of that, we are faced with a proposed \$1.3 billion in new taxes and fees that would increase costs for New York businesses large and small at a time when they can least afford it.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Governor Paterson has already indicated a willingness to change course and we urge the Assembly, the Senate and the Governor to work together to bring state spending growth down further – at least to the rate of inflation – and eliminate these onerous new taxes and fees. We are presented with a unique and historic opportunity to start taking steps toward a new budget discipline for New York, in which taxes and spending are balanced with a competitive and prosperous private sector economy.

Tough times call for tough choices, and we urge you to reject the tax and spend approach and make the right choice for New York and its business community.

Sincerely,

**Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce
Buffalo Niagara Partnership
Business Council of Westchester
Chamber Alliance of New York State
Chamber of Commerce of Ulster County
Chamber of Southern Saratoga County
Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce
Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce
Chemung County Chamber of Commerce
Corning Area Chamber of Commerce
Cortland County Chamber of Commerce
Delaware County Chamber of Commerce
Grand Island Chamber of Commerce
Greater East Aurora Chamber of Commerce
Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce**

**Greece Chamber of Commerce
Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
New Paltz Regional Chamber of Commerce
Orchard Park Chamber of Commerce
Otsego County Chamber of Commerce
Queens Chamber of Commerce
Rochester Business Alliance
Rockland Business Association, Inc.
Rome Area Chamber of Commerce
Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
Schenectady County Chamber of Commerce
Seneca County Chamber of Commerce
Staten Island Chamber of Commerce
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce**

**Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce
Fulton County Regional Chamber of Commerce
Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce
Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce**