

The Better Choice for "One New York"

To grow New York's economy we must invest in New York's working families. A healthy state economy requires well-educated New Yorkers, safe communities, affordable health care, affordable housing and a sound transportation infrastructure.

In recent decades, state budget policies have placed increasing pressure on local property taxes and local sales taxes. And the state government then came to the rescue with a program that provides rebate checks to all homeowners, regardless of need, and not enough to those who are truly overburdened by the increases in local taxes.

The Governor and the Legislature must work together to ensure that the 2008-09 state budget is fair to New York's families by balancing the state budget in an equitable manner that makes the state tax system fairer and begins to actually reduce the pressure on the local property and sales tax bases rather than shifting more of the tax burden onto the backs of low and middle income New Yorkers.

We can promote tax fairness, strengthen local economies and help struggling families by:

Creating a Tax System that is FAIR to all New Yorkers: The wealthiest New Yorkers' pay a much smaller percentage of their incomes in state and local taxes than low and middle income working families. Seniors on fixed incomes, working families and young couples are among the New Yorkers who suffer from the inequities in the current state-local tax structure. New York's policymakers must take the pressure off the property tax by restoring some of the income tax system's lost progressivity and closing corporate tax loopholes that allow some of the nation's largest corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

Strengthening Local Communities: Rather than putting increased pressure on the local property and sales tax bases and then providing "relief" to local taxpayers in the form of state rebate checks, New York State policymakers must work together to reduce the pressure on local property and sales tax bases by restoring the state's commitment to "revenue sharing" with its local governments and having the state government take over a greater share of local education and healthcare costs. And the state's STAR programs must be targeted to provide adequate relief to those families that are most in need.

It's time for New York State to end the special treatment of the favored few by:

- **Closing loopholes** that allow large, profitable corporations to avoid paying their fair share of state taxes.
- **Stopping sweetheart deals** with high-priced consultants who are being overpaid to do jobs that state workers can do better and cheaper.
- **Lowering drug prices** for state and local governments by using New York's purchasing power to get a fair deal from the drug companies.
- **Reforming economic development programs** by improving the effectiveness and accountability of Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs), the Brownfield Clean Up Program (BCP) and the Empire Zones program.
- **Enacting the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill** and making the beverage bottling industry return unclaimed bottle deposits.
- **Making New York's tax system fairer** and more equitable by increasing the top marginal tax rates on the highest income households.

We support the Better Choice Budget Campaign and agree to promote its message through our organization's work on the New York State budget:

Organization/Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____ **Fax:** _____

e-mail: _____

Please return to New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness, 212 Great Oaks Blvd., Albany, New York 12203. Fax to: 518-869-8649 or fill out the form on the web at www.abetterchoiceforny.org.