



Assembly  
Majority Leader

# JOSEPH D. MORELLE

Reports to the People

July 2013

Dear neighbor,

After a difficult but productive 2013 legislative session, I'm pleased to have this opportunity to share my thoughts with you, especially those who I have the pleasure of representing for the first time in the new 136<sup>th</sup> Assembly District.

From women's rights to voting rights to gun safety and job creation, the Legislature tackled a broad range of questions important to the future of our state. I hope you will find this newsletter informative, and of course do not hesitate to contact me with any thoughts or concerns you may have. Enjoy your summer!



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## 2013 Session

### ***A balanced budget and debates on critical issues***

Fiscal stability remains New York's most pressing challenge, and in 2013 we answered the challenge with a third consecutive balanced on-time budget that imposed no new taxes and dealt with the impact of Superstorm Sandy while closing a \$1.3 billion deficit.

The budget added support for education, increased the minimum wage and provided tax relief for businesses and middle-class families. In June the Legislature restored \$90 million for programs for people with disabilities, an action I proudly co-sponsored.

In this session the Legislature also debated critical subjects such as gun safety, women's equality and the future of gaming, which will be on the ballot in November.

We also approved Governor Cuomo's "START-UP NY" proposal establishing tax-free opportunities for new and growing businesses in Upstate New York.

Despite the work that remains to be done in Albany, particularly in light of the scandals that marred the 2013 session, I believe we are moving in the right direction on behalf of taxpayers and all New Yorkers.

## Majority Leader post a great honor, bringing challenge and opportunity

In January I was honored and humbled to be named Assembly Majority Leader, a position that brings with it responsibility for managing the Body's daily operations.

I worked hard this year to ensure that debates began promptly and that the Assembly made the most efficient use of its time. But perhaps more importantly, I believe my new role gives me a greater voice for representing our region.

Rochester, Monroe County and all of Upstate have unique economic and fiscal issues, and as Majority Leader I have the chance to bring those issues to the table in Albany. This is the greatest challenge and opportunity that comes with being Majority Leader, as well as the greatest honor.



*Joe addresses the Assembly as Majority Leader for the first time Jan. 9.*

## START-UP NY holds the promise of new prosperity for Upstate

It's no secret that job growth in Upstate New York has lagged in comparison to downstate and the rest of the nation for far too long. That is why I enthusiastically support Governor Cuomo's START-UP NY program, which will provide up to 10 years of tax-free operations for new and expanding businesses that locate on or near an Upstate SUNY campus or certain private colleges and universities.

High taxes have dampened economic activity in New York in general, and through START-UP NY a major obstacle

to new jobs and new prosperity is removed, even as safeguards against fraud and abuse are enforced.

As a sponsor of the bill, I insisted that areas without significant SUNY presence be able to participate in START-UP NY through the inclusion of our great independent schools, such as the University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology.

I am grateful to the Governor for his focus on Upstate and for his leadership on our economic future.

## For a Better New York

### Bill strengthens autism law

In 2011 I sponsored a new law requiring health insurers to cover screening and treatments for the childhood developmental disorder known as autism.

This year, with the unanimous support of both houses, I led the effort on a bill allowing the licensing of the behavioral professionals who provide so many of the services needed by those impacted by autism.

Only about 700 of these specialists are available in New York, far too few to meet demands connected with a condition affecting as many as 1 in 88 children.

### Protecting our public prosecutors

I recently joined state Senator Ted O'Brien on a bill requiring first-degree murder charges for the deliberate slaying of a public prosecutor, as happened in Texas earlier this year.

The integrity of our justice system depends upon the safety of those who serve on our behalf, and I believe this is a protection prosecutors must have.

### I-Square on the move again

In February I held a meeting of town, school and business leaders to resolve questions regarding the I-Square project, a project that means new private investment and jobs for Irondequoit and Monroe County.

Fortunately, we reached an agreement on a 25-year payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) plan that is fair to both taxpayers and the developer.

Thanks to all the community partners who made this breakthrough possible, and I look forward to seeing this exciting initiative develop in the months ahead.

### \$100K grant for Stepping Stones

The Stepping Stones Learning Center in Irondequoit is a successful and innovative institution, serving students of all abilities up to age 21.

That is why I was pleased to secure a \$100,000 state grant this year to help Stepping Stones with its move to a new and larger location on Hudson Avenue. The best of luck to a great school!

## In the Community

*Clockwise: Joe with Brighton WWII veteran Don Levine on Memorial Day; with coaches Jon Boon and Kevan Sheppard after Bishop Kearney's state basketball wins; presenting a flag to Boy Scout Troop 750 for display at the Scouts' national Jubilee; reading to Durand Eastman School 3<sup>rd</sup> graders.*



## Good neighbors, good government

### Land trade preserves a park – and saves a valuable property

When Brian and Elizabeth Conheady bought a house near Tryon Park in Rochester in 2010, they learned that part of their new homestead was actually on state parkland. Faced with possibly having to demolish their garage to resolve the issue, the Conheadys turned to my office for help.

I am pleased that through collaboration with the City of Rochester, we were able to pass a bill this session allowing the Conheadys to trade another part of their parcel for use as parkland, thus preserving a wonderful open space and their rights as property owners and taxpayers.