

An End of Session Update



from Assemblyman

**Will
Barclay**



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
ALBANY

August 2012

Dear Neighbor:

It's hard to believe the 2012 legislative session is already coming to a close. Since passing an early budget in March, my colleagues and I have taken action to improve the quality of life for all our communities through many different pieces of legislation. With this year's session concluded, I would like to highlight some of the real achievements of the past six months.

Mandate relief was broached during this session by passing legislation that would cap the county's share of the growth of Medicaid costs, with the full cost of its growth being assumed by the state in 2015. While this will provide a great deal of financial relief to our overburdened counties, there is still more work to be done on this front. It remains one of the main items on my to-do list going forward.

With sound financial planning and the consolidation, merging or elimination of nearly 30 government offices, my colleagues and I closed \$13.5 billion in budget deficits over two years without raising taxes. In fact, I'm proud to report that the middle-class tax rate in our state is the lowest it has been in nearly 60 years. This is on top of last year's historic 2 percent property-tax cap, protecting our residents from sky-high tax rates.

Along with lowering personal income taxes for our residents, we've taken many important steps to spur job creation. Through the establishment of the \$75 million NYWorks Economic Development Fund, thousands of jobs will be available for our residents. We also supported \$1.2 billion in NYWorks transportation funding to pay for bridge repairs, pavement-preservation projects and keeping motorists safe across our state. While there is still more work to accomplish to provide job opportunities for all our residents, we have laid the foundation for future economic growth across New York.

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This year my colleagues and I took many steps to address public safety. I was pleased that we expanded the state's DNA database by requiring a DNA sample from every person convicted of a felony or penal misdemeanor. We passed legislation to prohibit bullying and cyberbullying that put forth protocols to protect students and educate them on the consequences of victimizing others.

Legislation was passed making the possession of synthetic marijuana a criminal offense. I received an outpouring of concern from constituents regarding these dangerous products and was pleased the Assembly took action on this front. Both houses of the Legislature passed different bills concerning synthetic marijuana; now they need to work together on finalizing a bill to eliminate these addictive and deadly products, once and for all.

In two measures I supported, the Assembly passed bills to create the Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing (I-STOP) program and established the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs. Through I-STOP's real-time registry to track the filling of prescriptions and improved education and awareness of prescription-drug abuse, we can work to end this social epidemic. The new Justice Center would protect patients with special needs from abuse and mistreatment, ensuring these vulnerable residents receive the proper treatment that they deserve.

We also strengthened laws against child pornography this year. After the New York State Court of Appeals ruled that the viewing of child pornography is not a crime, we took action. In order to ensure justice and keep young children from being exploited, we passed legislation making all aspects of child pornography a crime.

My colleagues and I undertook many initiatives this year to enhance the quality of life for all New Yorkers. While there is still more work to be done to provide mandate relief for our counties and promote economic growth, several steps were taken in 2012 to put New York back on track and create a brighter future for the citizens of the Empire State. As always, if you have any questions or comments on these or any other state issue, or if you would like to be added to my mailing list or receive my e-newsletter, please contact my office.

Regards,



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