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CONTACT: John Kartch
Kelly Cobb
202-785-0266

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New York Senate Republicans Pass Property Tax Relief *Assembly Democrats Continue to Stall*

Washington, D.C. – In a special legislative session today, Republican Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos (R-Rockville Centre) led the passage of bill that will scale back increases in local property taxes for New Yorkers. The tax cap proposal also has the support of Governor David Paterson, whose Commission on Property Tax Relief originally proposed the measure, but faces strong resistance in the Democrat controlled State Assembly.

New York property taxes are the fourth highest in the nation, where families pay an average of \$4,800 per year. The tax relief measure will cap increases in school property taxes at 4% per year or 120% of inflation, whichever is less. The bill also allows voters in each school district to place stricter caps on their property tax growth through local ballots, including a complete freeze in taxes at current levels.

“In passing this tax cap, Leader Skelos and Senate Republicans have provided real relief to Empire State families,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “This measure is a common sense approach to slowing the growth of taxes on property owners, who already pay taxes an astounding 79% above the national average.”

The tax cap continues to face large hurdles before becoming law. Opposition is strong from Democrat Speaker of the Assembly Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan) and the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) union. Speaker Silver stated this week that the Senate’s bill is currently being reviewed by his office, but he has no plans to bring the measure before the Assembly by the end of the year.

“The Assembly’s failure to pass the tax cap measure this year will almost guarantee that New Yorkers will see their taxes continue to increase this year,” Norquist added. “With homeowners overwhelmingly in favor of capping property taxes in the state, the Democrat controlled New York Assembly is choosing to side with the powerful teachers unions instead of the people they represent.”

*Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases.
For more information or to arrange an interview please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jkartch@atr.org.*

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