



**AMERICANS
for
TAX REFORM**

Grover G. Norquist
President

January 14, 2008

Dear legislator,

In light of the upcoming budget debate, I write to urge you to stand on the side of taxpayers and resist any call for higher taxes. As the governor and members of legislative leadership have publicly stated, the state's budget hole may be addressed without raising taxes on New Yorkers.

Despite the adamant public statements made by Governor Spitzer and lawmakers that New Yorkers would not be subject to tax hikes, reports of tax increase proposals are already beginning to emerge from the legislature. Specifically, a tax hike on alcoholic beverages may be on the table in coming weeks.

Imposing a higher tax on alcohol or similar products sends a message to taxpayers that government regulators are more adept than they at making choices of what and how to consume. It is not only a matter of increasing tax burden, it is also a matter of using the threat of higher taxes to reduce personal liberty. Given the state's current fiscal situation, now is the time for the state government to seek reform, not increase its scope.

According to a study by Americans for Tax Reform Foundation, New Yorkers worked 209 days to pay off their share of the total cost of government spending and regulation last year. In the 2007 study, New York placed 49th of the 50 states. Taxpayers cannot afford for their tax burden to get any heavier.

As you continue to debate the various proposals before you, I urge you to reject all calls for tax increases and I encourage you to enact true spending reform instead. While utilizing one-time revenue sources constitute a short-term option to avoid raising taxes, long-term spending reform is the only way to ensure that taxpayers are protected in the long-haul. Under the constraints of a budget gap caused by government overspending, taxpayers are depending on you to tighten the state's fiscal belt rather than look to increase taxpayer burden as a bailout.

Enclosed, please find ATR's policy brief detailing alternatives to raising taxes. ATR stands ready to assist you in the fight against higher taxes. Please do not hesitate to call on me, or contact our state team, Karri Bragg or Sandra Fabry at 202-785-0266.

Onward,



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