

F R O M T H E D E S K O F
G O V E R N O R D A V I D A . P A T E R S O N

Dear New Yorker,

One hundred days ago, I stood in Albany and introduced myself to you as your Governor. In that time we have shared some remarkable accomplishments. We have much to be proud of and much more work ahead of us.

When I became the Governor of this great state we faced two unprecedented challenges. The first was the constitutional crisis that elevated me to serve as the state's chief executive and the second was a looming budget crisis that could have put the state's fiscal strength in jeopardy. My first priorities were to restore the people's confidence in government and to pass a responsible budget.

We were successful on both counts and the budget – passed a mere 22 days after I took office – was, for the first time in a generation, less than the one the Executive proposed. Even with those reductions we were able to include a record \$1.75 billion for education, ensure that every child in New York has access to affordable health insurance, provide \$700 million for an Upstate Revitalization Fund and \$200 million for statewide affordable housing. In addition, I have mandated across-the-board spending reductions of 3.35% for all State agencies setting new expectations about spending and the need for fiscal restraint during this time of economic downturn.

As the legislative session comes to a close, I am pleased that we have reached agreements on at least 26 important pieces of legislation including protecting homeowners impacted by the foreclosure crisis, reforming the Brownfield revitalization program, revoking the licenses of teachers convicted of sex crimes, expanding healthcare benefits for 9/11 rescue workers, improving the disciplinary system for doctors, keeping unsafe toys off the shelves, strengthening identity theft laws, ending the risks posed by mandatory overtime for nurses, and providing incentives for green building.

But we must do more. Our rising costs have led New York to the highest property taxes in the nation driving our young families and senior

citizens to other states. That is why I will continue to work with the Legislature in the coming months to reach an agreement on a property tax cap. The session may have ended but discussions about important issues such as trimming our budget and addressing our taxes have only just begun.

I am also pleased that over the past 100 days we have begun to restructure the Empire State Development Corporation by appointing Bob Wilmers, head of the Buffalo-based M&T bank, to head the agency. We reached a deal with the Legislature on the development of a major resort and VLT in the Catskill region which will create 2,000 jobs and we saved 1,500 jobs in New York City by brokering an agreement with the Legislature and the City of New York to take over New York City's Off Track Betting.

We also issued a directive to the state's agencies requiring them to enforce the law by making sure that same-sex marriages that are legal in other states are recognized here in New York. It is a meaningful and necessary step to ensure that New York does not discriminate.

Some of the most moving experiences I have had over the last few months come from my daily interactions with my fellow New Yorkers. From standing with Guardsman at Fort Drum as our young men and women departed for Iraq to speaking with the victims of the crane collapses in New York City I am struck by your compassion for one another, your strength in the face of adversity and your desire to give back to your communities.

Those moments will continue to guide me as I do my best to represent you and the State of New York. I look forward to continuing to work together to achieve success for all New Yorkers.

Thank you,

Governor David A. Paterson