

Business Group Forms To Hold Lawmakers Accountable

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White Plains, NY - Recognizing the need to change the political culture of New York State government in order to keep New York State economically viable, a Call to Action movement is being spearheaded by the Westchester County Association as the next phase in its ongoing advocacy initiative.

The group includes members from the WCA, the Long Island Association and NFIB (National Federation of Independent Businesses) and Unshackle Upstate, representing a total of over 80 business organizations throughout the State. WCA President William Mooney stated, "Mounting concerns about out-of-control spending at all levels of government that is forcing businesses to leave or consider leaving Westchester and New York State cannot be ignored. Now is the time to hold our elected officials accountable."

The committee agreed to a set of principles to hold elected officials accountable to control government spending. It also announced plans to issue report cards on how well the lawmakers adhere to those principles as part of a campaign to educate members and the public in advance of the November elections.

Mr. Mooney added, "Elected officials we would hope would adhere to the following statewide principles. Lawmakers no doubt will be held accountable if they deviate from these principles."

- New York State's spending must come down significantly
- New York's tax burden on individuals, families and businesses must be reduced significantly
- New York must live within its revenue each year without increasing taxes and fees
- New York must become more economically competitive with other states.

WCA Chair Al DeBello remarked, "The elections this past November and as recently as this Tuesday clearly indicate that a minor revolution is underway. There is no better opportunity than right now to let our elected officials know that the public is demanding a change in the way the business of government is conducted."

In addition, the Committee issued these guiding principles for the proposed 2010-2011 state budget that is projected to have an \$8 billion deficit and include \$1 billion in new taxes and fees:

- Consolidate both large and small government agencies and functions
- Identify ways to use state resources to stimulate private sector job growth
- Declare fiscal emergency with freeze salaries
- Reform the state budget process to instill more transparency and accountability into the process of spending taxpayers' money
- Change the structure of public compensation and benefits to reflect economic realities
- Hold school aid and Medicaid spending flat

Members of the Call to Action Committee have committed to educate their fellow employees, neighbors, civic associations, etc. about these principles in an effort to create a massive mobilization campaign to educate the public. In order to create a true grass roots movement, the WCA and its partners welcome the participation of any interested group or individual. Visit the WCA website at www.westchester.org for contact information and become a Facebook fan of the Westchester County Association to follow all developments.

The Westchester County Association is the preeminent business membership organization in Westchester County. The Association is committed to business advocacy, economic vitality and to providing a strong and clear voice for the interests of businesses on the regional, national and international levels. Its key objectives are: promoting positive economic development in the region; fostering business development; and providing its members with access and interaction with key public and private sector individuals, agencies and organizations.