

# Urban Elephants

## Westchester County Association Issues Call to Action Against Albany Dysfunction

Friday, 21 May 2010

The Westchester County Association has issued a call to action against Albany dysfunction. Almost 1,000 people attended a rally last night in White Plains to protest skyrocketing taxes, runaway government spending, a deteriorating business environment, and an arrogant and unresponsive New York State legislature and government.

The marquee speaker was former NYC Mayor Edward Koch, who called for citizens to begin pressuring their elected representatives for reform, and to hold those who remain unresponsive accountable by voting them out of office. Koch announced the formation of a reform coalition which includes himself, former Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and other reformers in both political parties.

From

<http://www.calltoactioncampaign.org/>

"Fast Facts

Years of borrowing, budget machinations and excessive taxes and fees have brought the state to the brink of bankruptcy. The facts speak for themselves:

- On average, a state has only 200 taxing entities. New York has nearly 5,000 with Special Districts adding another 7,000.
- The 2009-'10 state budget increased by 12% over the prior year and included \$8 billion in new taxes and fees to businesses and residents and used \$7 billion in federal stimulus funds to offset spending.

- New York residents on average pay \$6,303 in state, local and school taxes—one third more than the national average.
- New York State government workers rank second among all 50 states in salaries and benefits.
- The proposed 2010-'11 Executive Budget of Governor Paterson includes another additional \$1 billion in new taxes and fees.
- New York would be spending \$21 billion less if its budget growth over the past decade had been held to the rate of inflation and \$17 billion less if budget increases had been tracked to New Yorkers' personal income.
- The public sector employee (outside NYC) earns up to 46% above the private sector employee.
- Contributions to public sector pensions have increased tenfold in the past decade, from \$991 million in 2000 to \$10.1 billion in 2009.
- From 2000 to 2008, New York experienced the nation's largest outflow of residents to states. In one year alone, 2006-'07, the population loss drained \$4.3 billion in taxpayer income in the state.
- The New York Comptroller predicts local governments outside NYC will be forced to triple their contributions to public pensions over the next six years."