

NEWYORK
STATE
SENATE

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



JOHN J. FLANAGAN
SENATOR, 2ND DISTRICT

February 4, 2009

Honorable David A. Paterson
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

I write to express my strong opposition to Part FF of the 2009-10 Article VII Executive Budget for Public Protection and General Government. This budget proposal would freeze tax payments to localities on state-owned lands and ultimately reduce such payments by six percent.

School districts on Long Island are already facing millions of dollars in budget cuts as a result of the Deficit Reduction Assessment proposed in your Executive Budget. By now freezing and reducing tax payments that have been part of the Real Property Tax Law for several decades, this proposal adds salt in the wound of threatened school budgets and ultimately forces taxpayers to make up the loss in revenue through higher taxes.

Both Kings Park and Three Village are districts with high residential and low commercial tax bases. They have justifiably relied on the continuation of these state tax payments as a means of offsetting property tax increases, as well as for funding critical programs and services. Any loss in tax revenue that occurs from one year to the next is disproportionately assumed by the homeowners of these districts, who already shoulder some of the highest property tax burdens in the nation.

I am respectfully requesting that you reconsider this proposal as budget negotiations progress and urge you to publicly advocate for the removal of this provision as part of any final adopted version of the State Budget.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and attention to this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Flanagan".

John J. Flanagan