

## Koon Stands Up Against Budget

April 3, 2009: It's noteworthy that influential Albany insiders such as state Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and Assemblyman Joe Morelle are solidly opposed to the new \$131 billion state budget that already financially-stressed New Yorkers must pay for. The problem, however, is that they're only now speaking up after the Legislature's irresponsible action.

Granted, better late than never. DiNapoli issued a stern news release Wednesday calling the new budget an inadequate solution to "New York's propensity to spend more than the state can afford." He can say that again. Morelle, the Monroe County Democratic chairman from Irondequoit, along with Assemblyman David Koon of Perinton, also voted against all nine spending bills. Of course, with the Democrats outnumbering Republicans 105-41 in the Assembly, "no" votes by Morelle and Koon were hardly crucial. Still, they reflected fiscal reality.

Koon said the budget contains too much spending at a time of a \$17 billion deficit. "It's crazy. We can't afford this." Indeed.

Morelle was right, too, that the new budget was "structurally imbalanced" with an over-reliance on federal stimulus money and increased taxes that are scheduled to expire in three years.

Look for essays on the Speaking Out page by Morelle and Koon that detail their objections to the monstrosity crafted in secret by Gov. David Paterson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Majority Leader Malcolm Smith.

The only member of the Assembly's Democratic majority from this region to vote for the budget was Assemblywoman Susan John. (There are no Senate majority Democrats from the Rochester area). We invited John to explain her actions in a 350-word essay. Assemblyman David Gantt, the region's only other Assembly Democrat, has been out sick the past two weeks. However, he said he would have supported the budget and would consider writing an essay outlining why. Gantt and John apparently don't see the disconnect between a record spending plan and new taxes and fees at a time of deep recession. Is it any wonder that we're in this fix?

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