

April 2014

Re: 2014 Constituent Survey Results

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for taking the time to complete my 2014 Constituent Survey. Your responses and comments were very informative. As a cost-saving measure, constituents who completed the survey online and provided an email address are receiving this letter by email. Those within my district who mailed in a paper copy of the survey are receiving this letter by regular mail.

I received 3,072 responses, 25% more than last year: 32% from the City of Binghamton; 22.5% from the Town of Vestal; and 45.5% from the Town of Union, which includes the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City and other parts of the town, such as Endwell.

Enclosed is a breakdown of the responses, along with an update on each issue. The percentages do not add up to 100%, as each question included a certain number of people who left it blank. Please note that these results are not scientific, but they do guide the decisions I make as your representative.

Thanks again for your input. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me to share your thoughts and concerns. If you'd like to receive regular updates regarding legislative issues and important local news, you can sign up for E-News. Just go to my website: www.assembly.state.ny.us/lupardo, and click 'join my email list' in the left-hand column.

Sincerely,

Donna A. Lupardo
Member of Assembly
123rd District



Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo 2014 CONSTITUENT SURVEY RESULTS

- 1) *Do you support a 2-year moratorium on using Common Core test results for student and teacher evaluations?*

Yes - 1902 (61.9%)

No - 511 (16.6%)

Undecided - 600 (19.5%)

The state budget includes a four and a half year delay on the use of Common Core test scores on the permanent records and transcripts of students in grades 3-8. It prohibits the use of grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Math scores from being the sole or primary factor in promotion and placement decisions. It also requires that the State Education Department provide tools, resources and materials to assist in Common Core professional development for teachers. It further requires school districts to provide an annual testing transparency report as well as outreach materials for parents and the public.

- 2) *Do you support Governor Cuomo's proposal to fund technology upgrades in our public schools through a \$2 billion bond?*

Yes - 1582 (51.5%)

No - 883 (28.7%)

Undecided - 555 (18.1%)

The final state budget includes the Smart Schools Bond proposal. Should it receive voter approval in November, Broome County public schools would receive \$24.2 million for technology upgrades.

- 3) *Do you favor the state instituting a "circuit breaker" that would provide property tax relief for homeowners based on their household income?*

Yes – 2066 (67.3%)

No – 500 (16.3%)

Undecided – 449 (14.6%)

This year's budget does not contain a circuit breaker, but does provide for a two-year property tax credit (that will come in the form of a rebate check), provided that local governments and school districts stay within the 2 percent property tax cap. To benefit for a second year, schools and localities would have to propose a detailed plan to further cut costs.

- 4) *Do you favor decreasing corporate taxes for upstate manufacturers?*

Yes – 1517 (49.4%)

No – 1005 (32.7%)

Undecided – 503 (16.4%)

The final state budget eliminates the income tax on all manufacturers, saving businesses \$193 million annually. The budget also offers all manufacturers a tax credit equal to 20 percent of their property tax cost. These measures should help encourage investment and create jobs, especially Upstate.

- 5) *The minimum wage is due to increase to \$9.00 an hour on December 31, 2015. Do you support expediting that increase so it happens in 2014?*

Yes – 1779 (57.9%)

No – 1067 (34.7%)

Undecided – 194 (6.3%)

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This issue continues to be debated in the legislature. While it has support in the Assembly, the State Senate remains resistant to expediting the increase. This issue will be discussed further during the rest of the legislative session.

6) Would you rather see a casino be located at Tioga Downs in Nichols or Traditions in the Town of Union?

Tioga Downs – 1160 (37.8%)
Traditions – 1188 (38.7%)
Do not support casino gambling in our area – 573 (18.7%)

The New York State Gaming Commission officially started accepting casino applications on March 31st and will continue to accept them through June 30th. Each bidder must submit a resolution approved by local legislative bodies indicating support for the application and demonstrating local public support from businesses and community groups. Applicants will also have to provide detailed information on a number of issues including projected tax revenue, impact on local housing, connections to regional economic development plans, and an approach to combating problem gambling.

7) Do you support raising the age of criminal responsibility in New York from 16 to 18? (New York is currently one of two states in the country that prosecutes 16 and 17 year olds as adults.)

Yes – 1119 (36.4%)
No – 1602 (52.1%)
Undecided – 314 (10.2%)

The state budget includes funding for the Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice to make recommendations on how best to raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction, improve outcomes for youth, and promote community safety. It's important to recognize that the state would still hold the right to prosecute minors as adults in instances of violent crimes like assault, murder, or rape. The law is aimed at ensuring minors aren't prosecuted as adults for nonviolent offenses and are not spending time adult prisons.

8) Do you support legalizing Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in New York?

Yes – 1112 (36.2%)
No – 1337 (43.5%)
Undecided – 583 (19.0%)

This issue continues to be debated in the legislature where it has not passed in the State Assembly. Amateur MMA events already take place in New York State, including Broome County. Many believe that regulating the sport in New York will bring safer competition, in addition to increased tourism and economic activity.

9) Do you support regulating and taxing marijuana?

Yes – 1681 (54.7%)
No - 978 (31.8%)
Undecided – 353 (11.5%)

There is growing support in New York to legalize marijuana use for medical purposes, such as seizure disorders and cancer treatment side effects. The Assembly has passed this legislation many times and there is growing hope that the Senate will do the same this year. Colorado, for example, regulates and taxes marijuana for recreational use, which is expected to bring considerable tax revenue to the state. A recent PEW Research Poll found that 75% of Americans believe that decriminalization of marijuana is inevitable. However, we are several steps away from that in NYS.