

KOLB'S KEY

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Dear Neighbor,

Say this for Albany and our dysfunctional state government: at least it's consistent! New Yorkers had to wait nearly three months, but we finally got a state budget. Unfortunately, it's a budget that once again raises taxes on families and the businesses that create private-sector jobs. For over thirteen weeks, Albany dithered and delayed while stuck in denial about the new fiscal reality the Empire State faced: a \$9.2 billion budget deficit, local taxes that are 79 percent higher than the national average and over 800,000 New Yorkers out of work. Any surplus is long gone and been replaced by chronic shortfall, while generational theft has robbed younger New Yorkers of the brighter fiscal future they deserve.

Before I entered public service, I ran manufacturing companies in the private sector so I can say with complete confidence that if a business was run in the same inept way state government is, it would be out of business – fast. As anyone who runs a successful business, farm, or household knows, you don't spend more than you earn. And you certainly don't spend and then demand someone else pay for it. But, that is precisely what happens in Albany. However, there is a glimmer of hope. Even in a state government as broken as ours, reform can happen and change is possible. The key is not to quit, but to keep fighting. It begins by convening a "People's Constitutional Convention" which empowers taxpayers to take back their state government. To learn more, visit www.reformny.org – while you're there, sign the petition.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact my office at (518) 455-3751, or e-mail me at kolbb@assembly.state.ny.us on how, together, we can bring New York back.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Brian M. Kolb
Assembly Minority Leader



“I applaud Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb as a ‘Hero of Reform’ for signing the three NY Uprising pledges.”

— **Former New York City Mayor Ed Koch**
Founder, *NY Uprising*



“The to-do list for reforming New York goes on for a country mile.”

A “HERO OF REFORM”

“NY Uprising,” a non-partisan, independent good government coalition founded by former New York City Mayor Ed Koch, recently honored me with their “Hero of Reform” Seal of Approval. I was proud to sign NY Uprising’s three pledges to specific reforms in the areas of Independent Redistricting, Ethical Government and Responsible Budgeting.

Signing NY Uprising’s reform pledges was just part of my continued efforts to advance the cause of true reform and fix New York’s broken state government. I also have:

- Spoken at “Albany On-The-Record,” a statewide webcast and public forum sponsored by a coalition of good government groups to discuss the need for reform and restore taxpayers’ faith and confidence in state government;
- Introduced bi-partisan legislation (Assembly Bill A.9157) and held public Town Halls across the state to build support for a non-partisan, grassroots “People’s Convention to Reform New York” that would empower taxpayers to take back their state government and chart a positive new direction for the Empire State. More details on the “People’s Convention” can be found at www.reformny.org;
- Sponsored (Assembly Bill A.5631) and supported legislation to enact term limits for legislative leaders and legislators; protect families with a property tax cap; impose a state spending cap to restore fiscal accountability; and establish procedures for “initiative, referendum and recall” which grants taxpayers the ability to vote to create laws, repeal laws and remove elected officials; and
- Co-sponsored bi-partisan ethics reform legislation (Assembly Bills A.9544 and A.9032) which would have moved New York State’s government another step closer toward having the toughest ethics laws in the nation, which is one of my top priorities.

I want to thank Mayor Koch and New York Uprising for their determination to bring real change to New York and for recognizing me as a “Hero of Reform.” I will continue working with them and any good government group or individual who is committed to making our state government more ethical, accountable and responsive to the needs of taxpayers. I will not give up the fight for real reform, reduced government spending, lower taxes for hardworking families and the creation of good paying jobs here in the Empire State.

WHY WAIT TO BRING NY BACK?

As the 2010 Legislative Session ends, much is left undone. Had the state’s fiscal crisis been addressed long before the end of June, other significant priorities would not have been left on the back burner. There is much remaining on Albany’s “To-Do” list that still needs to get done. These issues include enactment of a property tax cap and state spending cap; permanent renewal of the Power for Jobs Program; implementation of a real statewide economic development plan to create an economic climate that grows the private sector; a People’s Convention to Reform New York; reforming and consolidating State Agencies and providing unfunded mandate relief for local governments and taxpayers. The to-do list for reforming New York goes on for a country mile. I will keep pushing for action on these agenda items. Passing a budget that should have been done on April 1st is not enough. More must be done to help taxpayers and businesses. Why should New Yorkers wait any longer for the Legislature to bring New York’s economy back? Please join our fight at www.reformny.org.



KOLB NAMED “LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR” BY RIFLE & PISTOL ASSOCIATION

I am proud to be a strong advocate for the Second Amendment and sportsmen's rights and firmly believe all New Yorkers should be able to participate in the honorable tradition of hunting that is proudly passed down from generation to generation.

That's why I was truly honored to learn I was named “2010 Legislator of the Year” by the New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, the state's largest, and nation's oldest, firearms advocacy organization. The award was given for my efforts to sponsor the State Legislature's first-ever Sportsmen's Lobby Day and for a commitment to preserving the Second Amendment, supporting issues important to sportsmen and strengthening the ability of all residents to enjoy New York's great outdoors.

I was thrilled by the success of our first annual sporting day and look forward to hosting this event every year.

I wish to thank the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association President Tom King, along with all the association's members for this recognition. Our “Sportsmen and Outdoor Recreation Legislative Awareness Day” was widely attended and showcased the positive role of outdoor activities in the lives of New Yorkers, as well as the state's economy, and provided hunters, sportsmen and outdoor recreation enthusiasts the chance to weigh in on the critical legislative issues affecting them.

I'm also proud of creating the Assembly Minority Agriculture, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Task Force to develop new strategies to promote outdoor recreation and raise awareness of the positive impact tourism has on the state's economy. Join our efforts to support sportsmen and outdoor recreation in New York by becoming a fan of our Assembly Minority Sportsmen Caucus page on Facebook.

LEADER BRIAN KOLB ASKS: “HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH YET?”

“Have you had enough yet? This is the question I want to ask all New Yorkers. Have you had enough of high taxes, runaway spending, chronic unemployment, a crushing cost of living and a broken state government that isn't working for taxpayers? Have you had enough of paying some of the nation's highest property, business and income taxes?”

I believe New Yorkers have had enough. After learning about all the taxes and fees the Assembly Majority passed, I know taxpayers will have had more than enough. If you had enough of the \$8.5 billion in job-killing taxes and fees in last year's spending plan passed by the Majority, you need to know the bill they enacted contained \$1.45 billion in higher taxes on everything from clothing to credit cards to cigarettes. Those increased taxes and fees will force people to dig even deeper into their pockets. The bill they passed did not contain a property tax cap, which means homeowners' local property tax bills will keep rising. It did not have a state spending cap, which means taxpayers will pay more for government's growing costs. It did not ban unfunded mandates - Albany dictating programs and policies to local governments without paying for them - which will result in higher village, town and county taxes.

The bill failed to reduce the size and cost of state government - it actually spends more than last year. This is another bad budget crafted through another bad process. New Yorkers who have had enough and are ready for change need to remember that when they had a chance, the Majority Party in both houses failed to do their jobs and did not lead.”



MILK, IT DOES A BODY – AND NEW YORK’S ECONOMY – GOOD!



Leader Brian Kolb welcomes guests to the Minority Conference’s annual Dairy Day celebration in Albany.

I cannot think of folks more deserving of our recognition than the hardworking family farmers here in New York State. I have always felt a strong connection to our community’s family farms and am continually impressed by their daily dedication to this way of life. It is a life that begins each day, well before dawn, and never slows down. New York’s family farmers are some of the hardest-working people you will ever meet and are the true backbone of our state’s economy.

In honor of New York’s dairy farmers, producers and providers, I hosted, along with the Assembly Minority Conference and Members from the Assembly Majority Conference, our annual Dairy Day celebration in Albany last month. It was a terrific event that again showcased a true cross section of New York’s dairy industry, including the New York Farm Bureau; Northeast Dairy Foods Association; and American Dairy Association and Dairy Council. Dairy farms and distributors provided delicious free samples of their award-winning, nutritious products. Our Conference and I appreciate and thank them for their continued support for and participation in our Dairy Day festivities.

According to the State Department of Agriculture & Markets, we have many reasons to raise a cold glass of milk and toast our tireless dairy farmers. New York is the nation’s third-largest dairy state with 5,400 dairy farms and over 100 dairy processing plants. Last year alone, our hardworking dairy farms produced – are you ready for this – 716 million pounds of cheese; 171 million pounds of cottage cheese; 15 million pounds of butter; 225 million pounds of yogurt and 37 million gallons of ice cream. Now, that’s a lot of dairy!

Aside from their tremendous financial contribution to our state, family farming has been, and must remain, a vital part of New York’s cultural heritage. As Assemblyman for the 129th District, I am honored to represent our dedicated family farmers in Albany and fight for their interests across the state. I have voted for and sponsored many non-partisan legislative initiatives that will help protect and preserve our family farms and will continue standing up for New York State’s strong farming tradition. The good news is that we all can support our New York family farms by purchasing milk and other local dairy products that are produced and sold right here in our state. Eating more locally-produced fresh ice cream is a personal sacrifice that I am confident many New Yorkers are more than willing to make!