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Assemblyman 19th District

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November 3, 2017

The Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I like many across the State of New York have waited with trepidation for details to emerge regarding proposed tax reform in Washington. The bill released yesterday confirmed my fears as a representative of a suburban district on Long Island that my middle class constituents could face higher taxes. As the debate continues in Washington regarding tax reform I urge you to consider solutions that benefit middle class families in all states. Simply put, tax reform intended to simplify our tax code and stimulate our economy should not include provisions that would cause many middle class families pay more.

The state and local tax deduction, commonly referred to as "SALT" dates back to our first federal income tax code adopted during the Civil War. It should not be associated with the complex tax code as we know it today. While many have argued that this deduction acts as a subsidy for high tax states, the imbalance between what New Yorkers send to Washington in taxes and what we receive in return has grown greatly in recent years. A recently released report from our State Comptroller shows this deficit to be close to \$41 billion dollars for fiscal year 2016, more than double what it was for fiscal year 2013. The elimination of the SALT deduction combined with the proposed \$10,000 cap on the local property tax deduction could cause many middle class Long Islanders to pay thousands more.

As a fellow Republican, I believe that tax reform and simplification should be aimed at creating a tax code that is fairer to the taxpayer and increases economic investment as a whole. Instead, the potential elimination of the SALT deduction and cap on the local property tax deduction is merely a redistribution of the tax burden that could raise taxes on many of my constituents. I urge you to amend this plan to benefit middle class taxpayers across the country.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Ra
New York State Assembly