

MY PLAN TO
HELP TAKE
BACK STATE
GOVERNMENT!

New York's Government is Broken.

Are you ready to take back your government and pass true reform in New York State?

Find out how with this special message from



ASSEMBLYMAN

CLIFFORD W.
CROUCH

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It is no secret that New York State Government is in desperate need of reform. Due to the concentration of power in the leadership, opportunities for true reform have been thwarted. These are reform initiatives I am supporting to give power back to the people.



A PEOPLE'S CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO REFORM NEW YORK

Every 20 years, the people of New York are given the option to convene a Constitutional Convention, but we cannot wait until 2017 to bring true reform to the way government operates.

This is how the legislation I am sponsoring will work:

- 1 The State Legislature would approve a measure to provide voters with the opportunity to decide whether there will be a convention.
- 2 The question to hold a convention appears on the following November election ballot.
- 3 If approved, voters would choose 201 non-partisan delegates from across the state who will decide the issues to be addressed at the convention.
- 4 State or local officials and lobbyists would need to vacate their office in order to become a delegate and would also be barred from accepting campaign contributions from party campaign or political action committees.

A PEOPLE'S CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO REFORM NY COULD OFFER:

- Budget Reform;
- Property Tax Reform;
- Debt Reform;
- Medicaid Reform;
- Pension Reform;
- State Spending Cap;
- A two-thirds majority requirement for any and all tax increases; and
- A system of recall of elected officials.

BUDGET REFORM

The budget reforms passed by the Legislature in 2007 allow for greater transparency and much-needed changes in the budget process. Regardless of these changes, leaders have been circumventing the law by failing to hold conference committees and avoiding budget deadlines. Having a Constitutional Convention could hold legislative leaders more accountable by instituting term limits for leadership positions and enforcing budget reforms already enacted into law.

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

Rising property taxes have forced many from their homes, increased the costs of doing business, and eroded the state's ability to compete with neighboring states. By adopting provisions from the *Property Taxpayer Protection Act*, property tax reform could include:

- ★ A circuit breaker provision that adjusts property taxes based on a homeowner's ability to pay.
- ★ Restoring the Middle-Class STAR Rebate Program.
- ★ Unfunded state mandate relief by allowing for resource sharing among schools and lowering red-tape measures that school districts are currently required to abide by.

DEBT REFORM

The state currently has over \$50 billion in state-supported debt. This amount is projected to increase remarkably given the current economic situation paired with poor budget decisions of "three men in a room." As the debt increases, the burden is passed onto our children, putting tough decisions that Albany refuses to make on hold for another day. Debt reform would:

- ★ Ban backdoor borrowing as a way to fund operations and pay for state government.
- ★ Require that a portion of a budget surplus go toward paying down debt.
- ★ Revise powers of the Public Authorities Control Board (PACB), which issues debt.

MEDICAID REFORM

In this economic climate, the state can no longer turn a blind eye to the billions of dollars that are wasted and stolen each year. We have recognized that over time, Medicaid costs have skyrocketed due in part to fraudulent claims and wasteful spending by patients and providers alike. To counter the billions in waste, fraud and abuse, my Conference and I have done several things to tackle Medicaid Reform in state government:

- ★ In 2006, my Conference and I were instrumental in a push to establish the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General – an independent entity of government – to tackle the issue of fraud, waste and abuse within the state Medicaid program. In 2008, OMIG succeeded in saving the state \$1.66 billion through cost-savings activities.
- ★ Creation of the Assembly Minority Task Force on Medicaid Waste, Fraud and Abuse in 2009; this task force continued to gather information and investigate the toll that Medicaid waste, fraud and abuse takes on the Medicaid system and taxpayers.
- ★ County Discretion for Optional Medicaid Services - Allow counties to opt out of providing optional Medicaid services to new enrollees.
- ★ Enabling Local Governments to Combat Medicaid Fraud - Create a grant to reimburse counties for Medicaid fraud investigation software.
- ★ Unfunded State Mandate Relief.

PENSION REFORM

In recent years, the cost of administering pension benefits have increased dramatically. At a time when taxpayers and local governments are strapped for cash, it is irresponsible to expect them to compensate the state pension fund by increasing taxes and fees. Dysfunction in Albany has enabled career politicians to maneuver from elected office to other government positions or vice versa, reaping the benefits of a higher salary and converting that into an increased retirement pension. Pension reform will address the multiple problems within the system, while providing savings to taxpayers and still maintaining a retirement plan for public employees.

Here's how it will work:

- ★ The new measure will begin by freezing current retirement plans for elected officials and carving them out of the Defined Benefit Plan that exists today.
- ★ Under this legislation (A.6932), a new Defined Contribution Plan will allow officials to be eligible to contribute to a 401(k) type model, but be prevented from accumulating a greater pension by going from one job to another.
- ★ This will address the multiple problems within the pension system, while providing savings to taxpayers.



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