



NEWS

From Bill Magnarelli

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120th Assembly District

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Open Letter to my Constituents

Dear Constituents,

In recent weeks, individuals and the media have publicly attacked the Legislature for supposedly dragging its heels or refusing to take action on various matters, and in particular, the budget deficit. I believe such statements mischaracterize the legislative process and misrepresent what is clearly at stake for the New Yorkers who have elected their legislators.

Democracy at its best should be measured and deliberative, exactly as the Founding Fathers intended it. For example, while I understand and am sympathetic to New Yorker's frustrations with the perceived lack of timely progress in Albany, revising the current budget should take all the time necessary to preserve essential social services, adequately fund public education, maintain our obligations to healthcare, and maintain our public infrastructure. Additionally, we must do so without shifting the burden of these services on to local governments, which creates the potential of higher property and school taxes on the local level.

Just as the Governor has a constitutional duty to put forth a proposal to balance the budget, the Legislature has the constitutional responsibility to review his plan, deliberate on it, and ultimately decide to accept, reject, or modify his proposal. That is exactly what we have been doing for the past months, which culminated in the passage of a deficit reduction package that will keep the State fiscally solvent for at least the next few months. The final product is a compromise among both houses of the Legislature and the Governor. This does not mean everyone is satisfied with the result. The Assembly has estimated that the current year deficit will actually be bigger than the Governor has predicted, and my Assembly colleagues and I pushed for deeper cuts than those that were enacted. However, we represent only one house of the Legislature, and we must come to a compromise with the Senate in order to enact anything into law. Again, this is exactly as the authors of the constitution intended. As the Legislature reconvenes for the 2010 session in January, I hope that my counterparts in the Senate and the Governor will join us in making further decisions on the budget as needed to maintain the State.

We were anything but idle during our December time in Albany. During these weeks of deliberation, while the budget was the key focus, the Legislature did act on other pieces of major legislation, including:

- Closing an unforeseen loophole in Jenna's Law,
- Toughening penalties for motorists who drive drunk with children in the car,
- Overhauling the oversight of public authorities, and
- Cracking down on mortgage fraud.

In the next two months, we will begin deliberations on the budget for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Currently trends in revenues and economic growth seem to indicate that the State will again have to make many hard choices to balance the budget. As always, I welcome input from my constituents on how they would like to see the budget balanced. To be productive, however, we all must move beyond simply opposing cuts to particular areas of the budget and explore ideas that create recurring savings and bring this year's and future budgets into balance over the long term.



1st Ward Trustee David Flaherty, 3rd Ward Trustee Jamie Colucci, 3rd Ward Trustee Thomas Tarolli, 1st Ward Trustee Ronald Benedetti, Assemblyman Magnarelli, Highway Supervisor Mark Cazzoli, Mayor Kathy Marinelli, and 2nd Ward Trustee John McPeak take part in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new highway garage.

• The Village of Solvay held a groundbreaking ceremony as they began work on the new highway garage at 3143 Milton Avenue.

The village has been without a proper garage since it was destroyed by a water main break in October 2007.

"I am happy to have secured a grant of \$190,000 to help the village of Solvay fund building its new garage," said Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli. "The new building will help the village properly maintain and care for their equipment. The department has a wonderful reputation of being able to take care of village residents, and this will help them maintain that."

The new garage will house the trucks and supplies which were pulled from the flooded garage two years ago. The building is expected to be completed in 2010.

"A new garage for the Village Highway Department is a much needed project to protect the investment of residents," said Solvay Mayor Kathy Marinelli. "We're very excited to see this building get started."



Representatives from the Bricklayers Local 2 spoke with Assemblyman Magnarelli at his December labor breakfast. Conversations at the event focused on labor unions' interest in recent or pending legislation and concerns about budget issues.



Solvay Elementary kindergarten students listened to Assemblyman Magnarelli read "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider."



Assemblyman Magnarelli and City Council President Van B. Robinson take a tour of "Falcon Trust," the new community credit union at Fowler High School. The branch will be operated by students, in partnership with Cooperative Federal.



Marilyn Laubacher and Bob Manning, members of the Central New York Library Council, met with Assemblyman Magnarelli at their legislative breakfast.

• St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center held a groundbreaking celebration to kickoff a \$220 million expansion. The project will take five years to complete and is expected to contribute to the revitalization of the Prospect Hill neighborhood.

The phase 1 of this project (emergency services expansion), expected to open in 2011, will include a larger emergency services building with 54 beds, 15-bed clinical observation unit, and more than double the existing room for the emergency psychiatric program. Also included in this project are a new medical office building, parking garage, new main entrance and lobby.

Approximately 600 construction jobs and 200 new permanent health care jobs will be created by this expansion.

The project is being financed with tax exempt bonding, hospital reserves, and a capital campaign. The hospital's auxiliary and the employees have pledged about \$2 million to the expansion.



Supporters and friends of the St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center pause for a picture after the groundbreaking ceremony. From left to right: Robert Simpson, president of the Metropolitan Development Association of Central New York; James Breuer, president of Hueber-Breuer; Syracuse Mayor Matthew Driscoll; Sister Patricia Burkard, general minister of the Sisters of St. Francis; Pamela Speech, president of St. Joseph's Auxiliary; Diane Totoda, 2009 winner of St. Joseph's Sister Patricia Ann Award for Excellence; Congressman Daniel Maffei; Assemblyman William Magnarelli; Assemblyman Albert Stürpe; and State Senator David Valesky.

• Syracuse Center of Excellence recently created a \$1.55 million strategic partnership with Siemens, a leading provider of building control and energy management system solutions. Siemens committed to be a multifaceted collaborative partner with SyracuseCOE, supplying their most advanced building automation technologies to monitor and control the headquarters. The headquarters, which are scheduled to open in early 2010, are equipped to act as a living laboratory, house office space and demonstrate new technological innovations. The partnership will focus on area of clean and renewable energy, indoor environmental quality and water resource management.



"Creating sustainable systems through clean and renewable energy is an investment in our community, economy and future," said Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli. "The partnership between Siemens and the Syracuse Center of Excellence is a combination of a business mentoring and teaching students, who in return will help the company by providing fresh ideas and academic research. Having the headquarters and building system research center in Syracuse will continue to put the city at the center of the green industry."

About New York State Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli

Assemblyman William Magnarelli represents the 120th Assembly District, which includes the Northside, Westside, Eastwood and Valley areas of the City of Syracuse, as well as the towns of Geddes and Van Buren. He first won election in 1998 for an open Assembly seat and was reelected in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008. During his previous five terms in office, Assemblyman Magnarelli has focused his efforts on bringing more jobs to Central New York, lowering taxes, providing our children a better education at every level, improving our healthcare and keeping our families safe. For more information, contact Assemblyman Magnarelli's District Office at (315) 428-9651 or visit <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/magnarelli>.