

# Free New York!

1535 Hertel Ave.  
Buffalo, New York 14216  
(716) 566-7720  
*President*  
James Ostrowski

[FreeBuffalo.org](http://FreeBuffalo.org)  
FreeBuffalo@adelphia.net  
cell (716) 435-8918  
*Executive Director*  
Paulette Peterson

Free New York News Alert No. 9

## **The New York State Budget is a Disgrace**

**By James Ostrowski**

**April 6, 2006**

The budget passed last week by the New York State Legislature is a disgrace. We will do a more thorough analysis of the budget later this year. However, it is clear from a glance at the budget and from press reports that this budget is filled with pork, patronage, and debt. While purporting to cut taxes, it increases spending past the rate of inflation, thus making future tax increases likely. It is nothing but an election year effort to bribe the voters with a tax cut while keeping all the special interests happy by borrowing money for their pet projects. The future be damned, past November 7th anyway.

Here's a summary of some of the problems with the budget:

1. The budget raises spending by six percent, above the rate of inflation.
2. New York's budget needs to be drastically cut, not increased beyond the rate of inflation.
3. There is no firm agreement about the size of the budget and citizens can find little intelligible information about this budget on any government website.
4. The budget purports to purchase votes with tax cuts funded by borrowing, which is fiscal insanity.
5. Billions are borrowed to fund school construction in New York City while taxpayers in Upstate will pay much of the bill.
6. The budget is filled with unspecified pork and member items.

7. Hundreds of millions of dollars in aid are earmarked for failed schools that have already squandered billions.
8. New York's budget is far higher per capita than the Northeastern states that compete with us for jobs, people, and businesses.

New York State already has the most expensive state and local government in the nation, except for Alaska. We should not be increasing but sharply *decreasing* spending, at least to the level of our regional competitors such as Ohio and Pennsylvania.

**Per Capita Taxes as a Percentage of Income (2005)**

*Source: CNN*

Ohio	Pennsylvania	New York
11%	9.7%	<b>12%</b>

The difference between Ohio and New York may not appear large, however, it equals 8.3 percent of New York taxes. If New York's budget was cut by 8.3 percent, that would amount to savings of about \$9.3 billion!

The New York Times reported that the new budget contains a slush fund of \$200 million "from the Community Projects Fund-007," but does not say what it will be spent

**Per Capita State and Local Spending (2002)**

*Source: Public Policy Institute of New York State*

Ohio	Pennsylvania	New York
\$4,522	\$6,824	<b>\$10,392</b>

on.”<sup>1</sup> It is known that \$50,000 will go to a private hunting club in the district of Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno.<sup>2</sup> This type of spending amounts to little more than legalized graft.

Governor Pataki is currently reviewing the budget to determine whether he should exercise his considerable veto powers. Governor, you promised to change New York when you were elected in 1994 and now is the time to deliver on that promise. If not now, when? If not you, who?

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael Cooper, Albany Leadership Puts Taxes Into Pet Projects and Private Clubs,” April 4, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Id.