

Justice?

Back in the 1970's the state put the municipalities on a 5% spending cap (today 3.5%) to reduce property taxes. Last year they added a 4% tax levy cap. Nothing is working. Why? Because the state passes laws after directives after regulations at great costs to the towns. The state is the biggest contributor to higher property taxes in New Jersey. To deny us those revenues so that the big cities can enjoy tax relief is a violation of justice. Our residents are citizens of this State, the same as everyone else, and to penalize them because of the size of the town in which they live is the epitome of bad government, demagoguery and discrimination.

Snake Oil?

Originally we hear that Corzine was cutting State spending by \$1.5 billion, and we all thought that was a big step in the right direction. But look at how the New York Times explains it:

"If enacted as proposed, the overall state budget would shrink by \$500 million to \$33 billion....Assuming inflation this year at around 3 percent, as it has been since 2004, the cut would be equivalent to roughly \$1.5 billion, or 4.4 percent of last year's budget, in real terms." Have you ever heard such nonsense before?

According to the Bergen Record we now find out that only \$200 million is being cut from the budget:

"Governor Corzine's budget contains an extra \$300 million for employee benefits, but doesn't acknowledge the spending as an expense for the year.

"That means he's proposing to spend \$33.3 billion in the coming fiscal year, not the \$33 billion he outlined during Tuesday's budget address in Trenton.

"...At issue is an "off-budget" fund of \$334 million..." *Imagine if you left part of your salary off your tax return insisting it is merely "off-budget" income!*

We also learned from the Record that "Lost in all the attention given to Corzine's budget cuts **is his proposal to spend \$1.2 billion more on everything...**But does plan on spending more money thanks to...\$900 million more in taxes."

If you believe that Governor Corzine's budget proposal is the proper way to proceed, and you are in favor of the state's cutting Riverdale's revenue, then please contact:

Senator Joseph Pennachio (R)
Assemblyman Alex DeCrose (R)
Assemblyman Jay Webber (R)
101 Gibraltar Dr.- Suite 1A, Morris Plains, NJ 07950

If you disagree with the governor, and you feel that his proposals are unjust, then let him know it!:

Governor Jon Corzine (D)
PO Box 001, Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000

Also contact these leaders in the Legislature, who will influence the eventual outcome of this critical decision:

Senate President Richard Codey (D)
Assembly Speaker Joseph Roberts, Jr. (D)
Budget Committee Chairs:
Senator Barbara Buono (D)
Assemblyman Louis Greenwald (D)

General Assembly
State House
P.O. Box 098
Trenton, NJ 08625-0098

New Jersey Senate
State House
P.O. Box 099
Trenton, NJ 08625-0099

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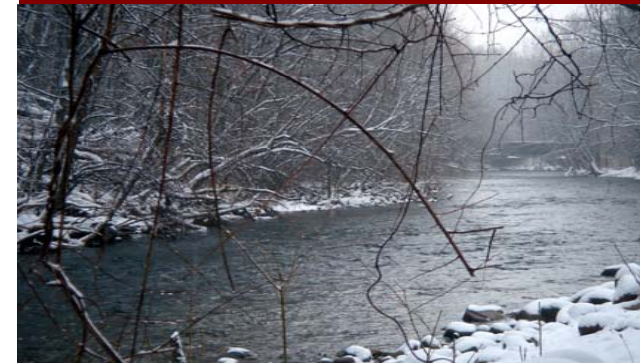
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Governor Jon Corzine's Proposed Budget Will Undermine the Quality of Life for All Riverdale Residents!

*Governor Corzine, will raise
Riverdale Property Taxes three
points if his budget is approved -
\$93 for every man, woman and
child in Riverdale!*



Corzine's Statement printed in the new
Budget Document proclaims:

"Finally, the budget
**DOES NOT RELY ON ANY NEW
OR INCREASED TAXES.**"

[emphasis in the original]

**This statement is an
absolute falsehood!**

The governor proudly and boldly proclaims that his budget “**DOES NOT RELY ON ANY NEW OR INCREASED TAXES.**” When it comes to the Riverdale taxpayers, that statement could not be more false. He is trying to balance his budget on the backs of the Riverdale Taxpayer, and other small towns.

Our loss in revenue would be approximately \$232,306 (3 tax points or \$120 per year on a \$400,000 house). We have always attempted different ways to share services, but it isn't always practical. Is Corzine so far out of touch with reality that he thinks he has to force us into different ways of saving money?

There is no way we would sacrifice our independence to merge with any other town, assuming another town would want us. What would a merger accomplish? If bigger is better then cities like Newark, Paterson, Camden, et al should be paragons of low taxes, efficiency, honesty and clean communities. If bigger is better then why does Corzine have to tax the smaller communities to bail out the inefficient large cities? We, who live in Morris County, are Corzine's biggest campaign contributors; without us to tax he would not be able to fund the socialistic programs he needs to buy the votes to get himself elected.

Our taxes are among the lowest in the area. If we merge with another town that has higher taxes, doesn't it stand to reason that the Riverdale section of the new community would be paying higher taxes to achieve parity? So why on earth would we want to do that?

Because we are small, yet efficient with low taxes, the governor wants to penalize Riverdale, forcing us to raise our property taxes. That makes his property tax reduction plan a colossal failure. As an example it costs \$5200 per person to run the City of Newark as

compared to Riverdale's \$2600 per person! Add to that the corruption in the big city, and the Newark's Office of Mayor has become a half-way house to a federal penitentiary. The best things come in little packages.

To tax the Riverdale residents just like everyone else in the state, but then refuse to offer us tax relief like most everyone else, is immoral and unjust. What right does he have to blackmail us into conforming to his preconceived notions of how local governments should be structured and operated? And he is doing it with our own money! The average Riverdale resident is not wealthy, other than the wealth of living in such a great community; we are still middle class. While we may have a comparatively low tax bill, it still impacts the life styles of our residents - notably the young families trying to get established and the seniors desperately trying to hold on to their lifelong investment. To penalize us by withdrawing our tax relief is, again, unjust and immoral, especially when wrapped in the false advertisement of tax reform and fiscal responsibility!

Corzine has never served in local government; he is not aware of the everyday issues confronting public officials. If he believes that his Wall Street background, where no wealth is created, no products produced, just the shuffling and transferring of paper, qualifies him to run our state, he is fooling himself and the citizens of New Jersey.

The local property tax is the best deal in town. Except for the relatively small percentage of the local tax that goes to the county, all of the local property tax stays within the community in which it was raised. The largest portion of our taxes, the school budget, is voted on by the residents. Local government officials do not enjoy the advantage of incumbency the state and federal office holders have; thereby holding us to

a higher standard of accountability.

Politicians like Corzine and his fellow Democrats are not interested in true tax reform; they are not interested in our residents paying lower taxes. The problem, as they see it, is that they have no control over the local property tax. They want to increase the state taxes over which they have total control so that they can more effectively redistribute the wealth of our hard-working residents. It is not to lower the total taxes paid by New Jerseyans, it is who will control those taxes. The more tax money the state politicians control, the more votes they can buy. The issue here is to reduce the taxing ability of the more responsible local government and hand that power over to the burdensome, unresponsive, out-of-control leviathan state government, which at this time is financially and morally bankrupt.

All this talk of local property tax reform by state officials is a smoke screen to divert attention away from their own malfeasance. What we need are legitimate state tax and state spending reductions. The state is billions of dollars in debt and they have the nerve to tell us how to run our communities.

Whenever these politicians speak of *tax reform* they are not looking to reduce taxes; they merely want to change the pockets they are picking.

Under the proposed system, those cities that are inefficient are rewarded with more and more infusions of extraordinary aid. The efficient ones are penalized by taking what little aid they are currently receiving and giving it to others. I guess some animals are more equal than others.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider the importance of this message.

William Budesheim
Mayor
February 29, 2008