

## Contact information for our elected officials

Do you have a concern about the new tax “cap” law? Do you want to ask your local representative for mandate relief? Would you like to see education aid restored? If so, now is the time to act! All voters can have a “say” in the laws and regulations affecting our schools by contacting their elected officials to share their opinions. Below you will find a sample letter, designed for easy use by our community members. It can easily be modified to contact any of the elected officials listed on the back of this sheet. Feel free to use the sample wording below, but also share YOUR story, and how significant cuts in education will affect you or your child.

\*\*\* SAMPLE LETTER \*\*\*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

As the Stillwater Central School District looks ahead to next year’s budget, it (like all school districts in New York) will need to live within the state’s new “property tax cap” law.

The new law has inaccurately been coined the “2 percent tax cap” leading many taxpayers to believe that their individual school tax bill will be limited to a 2 percent increase over the previous year. The new legislation, however, requires districts to calculate their own “tax levy limit” which could be above or below 2 percent.

Although Governor Cuomo himself has said there’s a “built-in relief valve” for schools to exceed their “tax levy limit,” the reality is that residents’ expectations are set at the fictitious “2 percent tax cap.” This adds to the pressure schools already face to keep taxes low. And yet, without help from the state in terms of more aid or fewer costly mandates, the choice will be to add to taxpayers’ burden by exceeding the “tax levy limit” or, more likely, decimate school programs.

Using the figures school leaders currently have, the Stillwater School District’s “cap” or threshold will actually be substantially below its current levy—a decrease of more than 4 percent. To stay within this “cap,” Stillwater would need to cut more than \$2 million from its budget, which represents nearly 10 percent of its expenditures.

Cuts of this magnitude could be devastating to our educational program, and yet for the district to even maintain its current tax levy (zero percent increase), the district would need 60 percent voter approval, an approval rate that no district can guarantee as every New Yorker continues to struggle in this economy.

We also urge you to seek significant and meaningful mandate relief for our schools. We need your help in reducing costly burdens on our schools to avoid the level of budget cuts Stillwater — and districts like it — are facing.

Sincerely,

A member of the Stillwater Central School District community

**The more officials hear from their constituents, the better...so let your voice be heard!**

For Stillwater residents, key elected officials to contact include:

**Governor Andrew Cuomo**

NYS State Capitol Building, Albany, NY 12224

Phone: (518) 474-8390

Submit comments through website:

<http://www.governor.ny.gov/contact/GovernorContactForm.php>

**Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand**

Leo W. O'Brien Federal Office Building,

11A Clinton Avenue, Room 821, Albany, NY 12207

Phone: (518) 431-0120

Submit comments through the website:

<http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov/contact/>

**Senator Charles Schumer**

Leo W. O'Brien Federal Office Building,

11A Clinton Avenue, Room 420, Albany, NY 12207

Phone: (518) 431-4070

Submit comments through the website:

[https://schumer.senate.gov/Contact/contact\\_chuck.cfm](https://schumer.senate.gov/Contact/contact_chuck.cfm)

**Congressman Christopher P. Gibson**

513 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Phone: (518) 306-5450

Submit comments through the website:

<https://chrisgibsonforms.house.gov/Forms/WriteYourRep/default.aspx>

**Senator Roy J. McDonald**

433 River Street, Hedley Bldg., Suite 1004, Troy, NY 12180

Phone: (518) 274-4616

[mcdonald@senate.state.ny.us](mailto:mcdonald@senate.state.ny.us)

<http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/roy-j-mcdonald>

**Assemblyman Tony Jordan**

383 Broadway, Room 202, Fort Edward, NY 12828

Phone: (518) 747-7098

[JordanJ@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:JordanJ@assembly.state.ny.us)

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Tony-Jordan>