

Dear [Insert Recipient Name]

As a taxpayer and Sachem Resident, I am acutely aware of the State's serious fiscal crisis. In developing the Sachem School District's Budget of 2008-09, our school officials worked long hours and attended many community meetings with its residents to provide our children a first class educational program with consideration for the community residents to be able to afford it. The suggested mid year cut in State Aid for New York State Local School Districts now being proposed by Governor Paterson, would have significant detrimental consequences for our children.

I am writing to urge you, as our State Representative in Albany, to reject the governor's proposal to reduce school aid by 836 million dollars. This reduction would necessitate staff layoffs, reduction of existing programs or raising already high property taxes. The Governor has suggested school districts to use all of their reserves, thereby forcing unwarranted tax increases next year to close the gap in next year's budget. Mr. Paterson, meanwhile, has refused to consider using the state's own reserve fund which could, by itself, close this year's budget gap!

As a result of the economic downturn, our district has already been tightening its belt. We have tried to make our Sachem District operate as efficiently as possible. We need, desperately, reforms in Health insurance, the Purchasing of supplies, liability insurance, real wicks law reforms, and energy savings that can only become a reality with state legislation and governor signature. In recent weeks, NYSSBA provided all legislators a report detailing 55 ways to make schools more efficient. Governor Paterson has not responded, to date, these important recommendations.

Mid year cuts are **not** the proper approach to solving a budget deficit. We urgently ask you to reject Governor Paterson's Budget Reduction Plan! Please implement real and meaningful reform and consider using existing State Reserve Funds. Do not short change the next generation of New Yorkers! Please, also, explore the feasibility of eliminating some costly unfunded educational mandates that have placed a great burden on the Local Property Owners. Thank you for taking time to read this urgent request. A reply from you is anxiously awaited by the citizens of the Sachem School District Community.