



New Jersey Senate

TRENTON

March 30, 2017

The Honorable Stephen M. Sweeney
Senate President
935 Kings Highway, Suite 400
West Deptford, NJ 08086

The Honorable Vincent Prieto
Assembly Speaker
1 Harmon Plaza, Suite 205
Secaucus, NJ 07094

Dear President Sweeney and Speaker Prieto:

New Jersey residents pay the highest property taxes in the nation, with average tax bills of \$8,549. We have no doubt those bills would be even higher if not for the two-percent cap we enacted together in 2010 with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Still, much more remains to be done to provide real property tax relief to all New Jerseyans.

There is one particularly glaring abuse that seems to be low-hanging fruit that is ripe for reform: let's work together to eliminate the often six-figure payouts for unused sick-time to retiring public employees.

These massive payouts threaten local budgets, put public services at risk, and add to the already overwhelming burden on property taxpayers.

An article published today by NJ Spotlight puts the total accumulated liability to towns, counties, and school districts for unused sick time at nearly \$1.9 billion.

We've all seen the stream of news articles highlighting individual payouts of \$300,000 or \$400,000 to retiring individuals. Some payouts have been even higher, and some towns have had to make tough choices when faced with several retirements and large payouts in a single year.

This is a problem that impacts towns and cities of all types and property taxpayers in every corner of New Jersey. That's why there are at least fifteen different bills sponsored by both Republicans and Democrats that seek to achieve sick leave reform in some fashion.

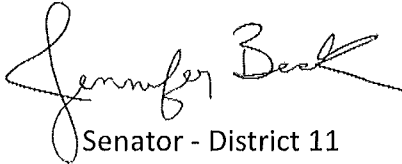
While we each sponsor our own individual bills and have made numerous efforts to advance our legislation, we are not concerned with who gets credit if sick leave reform can be achieved.

Accordingly, we encourage both of you as the leaders of the Senate and General Assembly, with the power to set the Legislature's agenda, to advance any of the sick leave reform bills sponsored by members of either party in either house.

Unaffordable property taxes remain the greatest complaint that we hear about from constituents day after day, and year after year. Let's put aside politics and do something about it together.

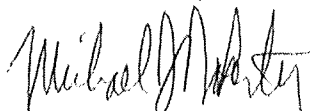
Sincerely,

Jennifer Beck



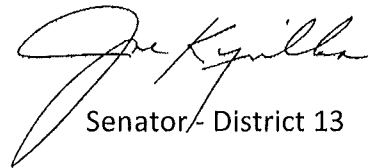
Senator - District 11

Mike Doherty



Senator - District 23

Joe Kyrillos



Senator - District 13