



Town of Brookhaven Long Island

Edward P. Romaine, Supervisor

March 13, 2019

Hon. Carl Heastie
Speaker, NY State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader, NY State Senate
Legislative Office Building, Room 907
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Speaker Heastie and Majority Leader Cousins:

We are writing you today to urge you to make the New York Property Tax Cap permanent as part of the final 2019-20 budget that will be adopted this year. Making the Tax Cap permanent is critical to making New York affordable for our residents.

In 2011, Governor Cuomo proposed groundbreaking legislation to cap property taxes, which was approved by the legislature. Since that time, Brookhaven Town has stayed within that cap every year. The Town's adopted 2019 Operating Budget uses no surplus to balance any of the six major funds while maintaining staffing levels and making no cuts to constituent services. We have done this through a simple commitment of living within our means.

By doing this, Brookhaven Town had its Triple A Bond Rating reaffirmed by Standard & Poor's. In issuing the Town its highest possible rating, Standard & Poor's cited the Town's "very strong management with strong financial policies and practices, strong budgetary performance and very strong budget flexibility." Munistat, the Town's Financial Advisor, has estimated that the Town's Triple A Rating has saved Brookhaven Taxpayers millions in future debt service payments.

Through shared services, we are making Brookhaven Town more efficient and affordable, not just in Town government, but with other municipalities as well. We have too much government on Long Island, and we are committed to working together to streamline operations and eliminate duplication.

The Brookhaven Town Board will continue to monitor our expenses, as our residents cannot pay more in taxes. Too many people, young and old, are leaving Long Island in pursuit of lower taxes elsewhere. While we are the smallest portion of the tax bill, comprising only 8%, we are committed to keeping our Town affordable for all. All levels of government must do their part – including New York State. Without full restoration of New York State Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding in this budget, the state will be complicit in making property taxes unaffordable.

Making the tax cap permanent is critical to achieving this. Because of this, we urge you to make a permanent tax cap part of the budget that will be adopted by New York State this year.

Sincerely,



Edward P. Romaine
Supervisor



Valerie M. Cartright
Councilwoman, District 1



Jane Bonner
Councilwoman, District 2



Kevin LaValle
Councilman, District 3



Michael Loguercio
Councilman, District 4



Neil Foley
Councilman, District 5



Dan Panico
Councilman, District 6

Office of the Supervisor

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