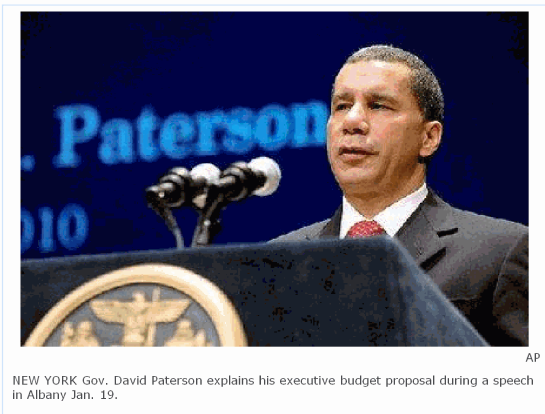


Budget busters: Central New York letter-writers critique Gov. David Paterson and New York state budget plan

By Readers' Page
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Health care taxes create more uninsured in N.Y.

To the Editor:

Gov. David Paterson has released an executive budget piled high with health care taxes, including a doubling of taxes on inpatient and home care. There are also proposed tax hikes for nursing homes, as well as an expanded surcharge on physician's services.

These proposed increases in 2010-11 health care assessments would be added on top of the 2008-09 health care assessments enacted less than a year ago and would hit New Yorkers at a crucial time, when national health care reform carries the promise of new health care and insurance taxes nationally.

Medical providers would have no choice but to build the taxes into the cost of their services and pass them on. Inevitably, increases in medical costs will result in increased insurance rates, meaning fewer individuals in our state can afford the premiums.

As president of the New York State Association of Health Underwriters, I am on the front lines of this health care crisis. I bear witness every day to how increases in health insurance rates affect people and families. I recognize that our state is in a financial quandary, but increasing taxes on the health care sector will just exacerbate the problem, further creating more uninsured New Yorkers.

As more people are dropped from the rolls of the insured, this health care tax revenue would decrease, prompting a trend of higher taxes collected from fewer premium payers statewide. No one would win.

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