

# CITIZENS BUDGET COMMISSION

One Penn Plaza ▪ Suite 640 ▪ New York, NY 10119

January 24, 2007

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The Honorable Eliot Spitzer  
Governor

Office of the Governor  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Spitzer:

The Citizens Budget Commission supports the enactment of A2755. The combination of reforms included in the bill is likely to enhance the timeliness and transparency of the State budget and help avoid the late budgets for which New York is notorious. Specifically, it will:

- Facilitate early agreement on revenue estimates by calling on the comptroller if necessary;
- Improve the information available on member items, long a source of secretive spending on projects that do not necessarily generate public benefits, by requiring itemization;
- Add a measure of fiscal discipline to the process with provisions that require the Legislature to consider balance as they enact the budget;
- Increase the rainy day funds to more sensible levels for a state of New York's size, and the prudent addition of economic triggers on the fund will prevent misuse. The CBC has long advocated for the creation of a "real" rainy day fund and is encouraged to see it created in this legislation; and
- Improve the level of detail in the financial plan, especially with regard to the impact of State actions on local governments.

In the coming months we encourage you and your staff to consider additional measures to improve the budget process even more. We urge you to consider strengthening the budget balance requirement by extending it to all funds, expand financial results reporting according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, and to push for additional public disclosure of State spending not just on member items but in all areas of the budget.

In closing, we are encouraged by the possibility of the quick passage of a set of needed budget reforms. We urge you to sign A2755 into law.

Sincerely,



Diana Fortuna  
President