

March 26, 2007

New York State Governor Eliot Spitzer  
State Capitol  
Albany  
New York 12224

Dear Governor Spitzer,

As leaders of communities of faith representing, collectively, millions of New Yorkers in cities, villages and towns in every corner of our great state, we write with one simple message today. We pray that you see to it that the tuition tax deduction you proposed is, in fact, included in the final state budget.

You campaigned on the promise to change the culture of Albany and to ensure that the focus of government is on people rather than special interests and entrenched powers.

We are shocked that anyone could, or would, oppose this modest program aimed at providing real, tangible relief to struggling families. All New Yorkers should rally around this. That the public school teachers' lobbyists and the legislators beholden to them are working to derail this program forces us to act – and to speak up.

Hearing, as we do each day, of families that struggle to make ends meet, we know that average New Yorkers will truly benefit from this proposal. We urge you to stand firmly with the families of New York State. Passage of this program will help open up educational opportunities for New Yorkers in need.

The Easter and Passover holidays remind us of our callings, to speak truth to power and to take up the prophetic call to help the needy and speak for those who have no voice. We pray you have needed no convincing. We trust you will stand with us and the families of a half million school children.

Sincerely and respectfully,

**His Eminence,  
Edward Cardinal Egan**  
Archbishop of New York

**Reverend Floyd Flake**  
Greater Allen A.M.E.  
Cathedral of New York

**Most Rev. Nicholas DiMarzio**  
Bishop of Brooklyn

**Rabbi Dale Polakoff**  
President, Rabbinical Council  
of America

**Reverend Dr. David Benke**  
President, Atlantic  
District, Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod

**Most Rev. Matthew H. Clark**  
Bishop of Rochester

**Rabbi Dr. Elie Abadie**  
Sephardic Community  
Federation

**Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**  
Executive Vice President,  
Union of Orthodox Jewish  
Congregations of America

**Most. Rev.  
Robert J. Cunningham**  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

**Rabbi Pesach Lerner**  
Executive Vice President,  
National Council of Young  
Israel

**Most Rev. William F. Murphy**  
Bishop of Rockville Centre

**Most Rev. Edward U. Kmiek**  
Bishop of Buffalo

**Reverend  
Johnny Ray Youngblood**  
St. Paul Community Baptist  
Church

**Rabbi Kenneth Brander**  
Dean, Yeshiva University  
Center for the Jewish Future

**Most Rev. James M. Moynihan**  
Bishop of Syracuse

**Reverend Harry J. White II**  
Bethel A.M.E. Church

**Most Rev. Howard J. Hubbard**  
Bishop of Albany

**Reverend Dr.  
Stephen P. Bouman**  
Bishop, Metropolitan New  
York Synod, Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America