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**Governor's STATE OF THE STATE MESSAGE
January 9, 2002**

Yesterday, Governor Pataki gave his 8th State of the State address to a joint session of the legislature. He began by commending the heroes of the September 11th tragedy and celebrating the lives that were lost, both the innocent victims and those fallen in the line of duty.

Rebuilding New York, through tighter budgets, new business initiatives and an on-going effort to combat all threats to public security was the theme of his speech. The Governor recognized a number of individuals personally involved in the tragedy including rescue workers, grieving families and both the past and the current mayors of New York City.

The Governor's plan to overcome post-9/11 challenges includes submitting a budget that "not only holds the line on spending, but reduces general fund spending substantially." He called on the Legislature to work together at all levels to transcend the state's current fiscal difficulties, stating that great strides had already been made in that direction. "Senator Bruno, Speaker Silver," the Governor addressed them, "I applaud you for proposing no increase in spending for Assembly and Senate operations in the fiscal year that begins April 1st."

Holding the line on spending is not the only way the Governor seeks to revitalize the economy. He announced that he will also submit to the Legislature "a broad package of initiatives that, combined with the innovative and successful investments already underway, will help reinvigorate our economic progress. I will propose a new Empire Opportunity Fund to support economic development projects that will create jobs and spark growth in upstate New York and on Long Island."

Another way that the Governor proposes to run a more efficient operation is by examining the size and scope of government. He spoke of government reform at all levels, declaring that he will "create a task force to advance this goal at the local level by exploring innovative reforms and new ideas aimed at making government more efficient at the village, town, city and county levels."

Another economic stimulus he mentioned was competing to host the 2012 Summer Olympics in New York City, and luring the Winter Games back to Lake Placid.

The Governor insisted that spending restrictions will not delay tax cuts, impede investments in high tech and bio-tech research, or renege on the state's commitment to environmental protection. Additionally, Pataki declared, "even in tight fiscal times, we can and must pass sweeping reforms that enhance public safety, improve education, expand health coverage...we will make these programs even more accessible, giving more children, more working parents and more seniors the health care they need and deserve."

To read the full text of the Governor's address, click on this link:
<http://www.state.ny.us/sos2002.html>