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Opinion Roundup On The Need To "Pass The Tool Kit"

Friday, November 12, 2010 • Tags: [Budget and Spending](#)

Daily Record – "The Democrats Need To Stop Dawdling And Pass The Tool Kit."

The Record, "Pass the tool kit":

"The effects of the hard cap on municipal spending that was passed by the Legislature and signed by Christie earlier this year will be felt soon. Time is running out for legislators, and in many a municipal building the alarm already has sounded. Budgets for next year cannot be crafted on possible legislative fixes. If the Legislature does not act, draconian tax hikes will occur in many of New Jersey's 566 municipalities...The tool kit is not the ultimate solution for the state's runaway debt, but it is a necessary part of the equation...By ignoring the tool kit, legislators continue to avoid confrontation with powerful unions. There is little political capital at risk by calling for shared services without providing the means of reducing the costs for service. But there is actual capital at risk: taxpayers' money. New Jerseyans don't need to hear what they already know. They need to see what has not been done finally accomplished. Pass the tool kit." ("Enough rhetoric," The Record, 11/11/2010)

Daily Record, "The Democrats need to stop dawdling and pass the tool kit":

"...no reason for Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver and the rest of the Democrats in the Senate and Assembly not to pass Christie's tool kit. The bills it contains will help stabilize property taxes. Language giving the state more power in regard to mergers always can be added after the main package is approved. The Democrats need to stop dawdling and pass the tool kit." ("Sweeney has a point about the 'tool kit,'" Daily Record, 11/12/2010)

Asbury Park Press, "Sweeney needs to get started...":

"Sweeney, D-Gloucester, seems to think that because Christie's so-called tool kit of property tax reforms won't cure every ill that ails New Jersey's body politic, the tools are props and in some cases not worth enacting. That's ridiculous. Christie never claimed his tool kit would usher in a low-tax utopia. He is simply trying to make the state more bearable for taxpayers...Sweeney and Christie proclaimed themselves ready to work with each other to pass reforms. Sweeney should know that proclamations are one thing. Doing the actual work is quite another... William G. Dressel Jr., executive director of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities hit the tool kit nail on the head: "Is it the panacea to our property tax woes? No." But the measures are a start, he added. Sweeney needs to get started, too, instead of deriding the tool kit as a false panacea when it was never characterized as one." ("Start banging with tool kit," Asbury Park Press, 11/5/2010)

The Record, "Lawmakers have made mainly cosmetic changes, passing laws that sound good but won't actually save much money":

"Christie would argue that he's given them the money-saving strategies they'll need, in a "tool kit" package of proposed reforms, including changing civil service and arbitration rules. And that's where the Legislature is supposed to come in, and approve new laws to empower towns to cut costs. Mostly, it hasn't. Lawmakers have made mainly cosmetic changes, passing laws that sound good but won't actually save much money...Municipal leaders need to apply pressure of their own on legislators to act. Unless they do, it will be taxpayers caught in a vise. And that is the wrong tool for reform." ("No tools in the box," The Record, 11/9/2010)

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