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Unshackle Upstate says new state budget must not raise spending

Staff reports

Unshackle Upstate, a business-led coalition that seeks change in Albany, said today that any increase in spending, taxes or fees in the upcoming state budget "is absolutely unacceptable."

<http://blogs.democratandchronicle.com/editorial/tag/gov-paterson/>>Gov. David Paterson is to present his 2010-11 budget plan on Tuesday. Last year, state legislators raised spending almost 9 percent at a time when the state and nation were in the depths of the recession. "The 2010-11 state budget must be realistic and in line with state revenues," Brian Sampson, Rochester-based executive director of Unshackle Upstate, said in a statement issued from Albany. "Following a year that included unprecedented hikes in taxes and fees, Unshackle Upstate opposes the passage of any budget that continues to have bloated and unsustainable levels of spending," Sampson said. "Even spending increases below the rate of inflation are unaffordable and unacceptable." Unshackle, which was started several years ago by Rochester Business Alliance CEO Sandy Parker, called for state spending to be reduced over the next five years to bring it in line with the inflation-adjusted level of spending in 2000. "New York would be spending \$21 billion less if its budget growth over the past decade had tracked inflation" instead of exceeding it, Sampson said, citing a report by the Empire Center for New York State Policy.