

New biz lobby spends \$4.8M in 2 months

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A new business lobby spent \$4.8 million on its efforts just in the months of March and April, according to regulatory filings.

It marks an 85 percent increase beyond what the Committee to Save New York spent on lobbying in the first two months of the year.

All told, the committee has spent \$7.4 million in four months. The tallies appear to dwarf what any other business lobby is putting up to try to influence state government and voters.

The committee became active this year, and its agenda resembles that of Gov. **Andrew Cuomo**. The committee, funded mainly by downstate interests, first pushed for the adoption of Cuomo's budget plan.

Now, it's advocating for Cuomo's proposed cap on property taxes, featuring a statewide TV ad that debuted earlier this month.

"I know we still have funds available, and the property tax cap is the No. 1 item," said **Sandra Parker**, co-chair of the committee and head of the Rochester Business Alliance.

Cuomo's plan would allow school and local property taxes to increase by no more than 2 percent a year, or inflation, whichever is smaller.

Parker and other committee members declined to say how much money they plan to spend going forward.

Other business groups continue to tout Cuomo's tax cap plan. The bill has passed the Republican-led Senate in a bipartisan 45-17 vote, but it faces much more opposition in the Assembly, controlled by Democrats.

Today, representatives from 30 business lobbies and chambers will meet with 25 members of the Assembly to make their case.

The New York State Association of Realtors plans to hold its own tax-cap lobby day on May 24.