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JULY 26, 2012 6:00 AM

NY Voters Dead Set Vs. Legislative Pay Hike: Poll

BY CELESTE KATZ

More pay? No way!

Fully 80% of New York voters oppose a pay raise for state legislators, a new Quinnipiac University poll finds.

Resistance to a salary hike for members of the Assembly and Senate -- who make \$79,500 annually and haven't seen a boost since 1999 -- cut across political party, gender and race lines.

Voters with a household income exceeding \$250,000 were marginally more amenable to raises, with only 53% against the idea.

The vast majority of those surveyed -- again, 80% -- said paying pols more wouldn't attract better candidates to the Legislature, which garnered a 31% - 51% negative approval rating.

Linking a raise to other measures didn't help much, the Q Poll showed.

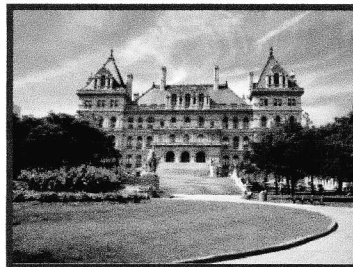
Some 66% of respondents said they were still against raises as part of a deal to boost New York's minimum wage, and 63% continued to disapprove even if a bump were tied to a law limiting the size of campaign contributions.

However, asked by Quinnipiac how often state legislators should get a pay raise,

- 3% say every year;
- 43% say every two to five years;
- 23% say every six to 10 years;
- 12% say less often; and
- 10% say never.

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said last week that while there are currently no "deep" discussions of lawmakers voting themselves an increase, that doesn't mean it won't happen later this year.

"Could there be a deal? Bigger legislative paychecks in exchange for some campaign-finance reforms? How about buying some love for lawmakers by raising the minimum wage? Voters want none of it," said Quinnipiac's Mickey Carroll.



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"More than two out of three voters say state legislators should get a raise every six to 10 years, or less, but Albany lawmakers haven't had a raise in 13 years. Lawmakers looking for a raise might want to get that message out to the voters."

What DO New York State voters support? Raising federal income taxes on wealthier families.

Quinnipiac found:

- 29% support higher taxes on those with a household income exceeding \$250,000 per year;
- 40% support a tax hike on people with a household income of more than \$1 million annually; and
- 28% are opposed to any federal income tax hike.

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