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To the Editor:

We have known for years that New Jersey was headed toward a fiscal crisis. During the last five years the state continued to spend without restraint. In fact, during the period from 2002 through present, state spending increased from \$22 billion to \$34 billion and state debt climbed from \$17 billion to \$35 billion.

Forced to bear the increasingly heavy burden of this spending spree, taxpayers have pleaded loudly for relief. Although Governor Corzine tried to add a massive 800% toll increase to their already heavy load, the taxpayers have finally screamed loud enough to make it impossible for the Governor to ignore them.

With no support for his toll hike plan, and no way to continue the spending spree, Governor Corzine has finally been forced to introduce a budget that cuts spending as taxpayers have repeatedly demanded.

Governor Corzine's budget proposal is a step in the right direction. But the difficult next step will be getting the legislature to get on board with spending reductions. Without legislative leadership agreeing to fiscal restraint, the Governor's proposals will be merely empty promises.

Sincerely,

Sean T. Kean

Senator – District 11