



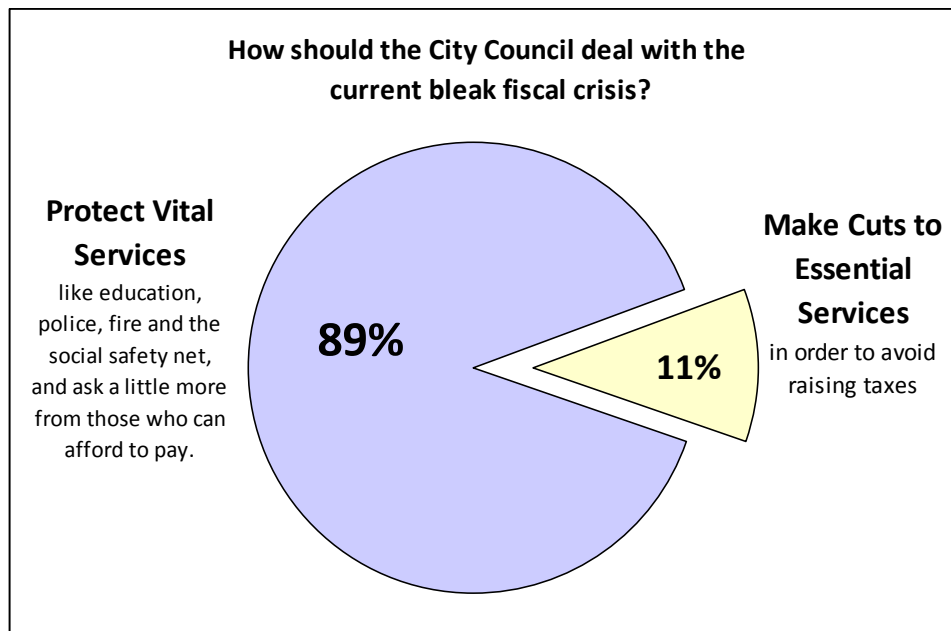
THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

250 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007

The Progressive Caucus asked 2,000 New Yorkers how the City should respond to our current fiscal challenges, and the response was overwhelming:

New Yorkers Support Fair-Share Revenue Options to Protect Vital Services

89% support protecting vital services like education, police, fire, and the social safety net, and asking for a little more from those who can afford to pay.



Response to question "How should the City Council deal with the current bleak fiscal crisis?"

Cuts to Youth, Family and Seniors Services Strongly Opposed

Top Seven Budget Cuts Survey Respondents Oppose

- ⇒ Close **16 child care centers** (87%)
- ⇒ Eliminate funding for **500 food pantries** citywide (86%)
- ⇒ Close **16 libraries** and severely reduce service to 2-4 days a week in most branches (86%)
- ⇒ Close **1/4 of senior centers** (85%)
- ⇒ Close **20 fire engine companies** (85%)
- ⇒ Eliminate 248 **HIV/AIDS & HASA services** case managers (78%)
- ⇒ Cut **English classes and support services for immigrants** (77%)

Survey Respondent from Brooklyn:

"I think it's absolutely crucial that City Council hold the line on cuts to essential city services. I don't want to see a rerun of what happened to the city in the 1970s"

Response to question "This is a selection of some of the cuts the Mayor has proposed to balance the budget. Which should be pursued to close the budget gap?" Percent shown is total percent that were strongly or somewhat opposed because they responded "No" or "Maybe" (Answer orders were rotated).

Broad Support for Specific Revenue Options

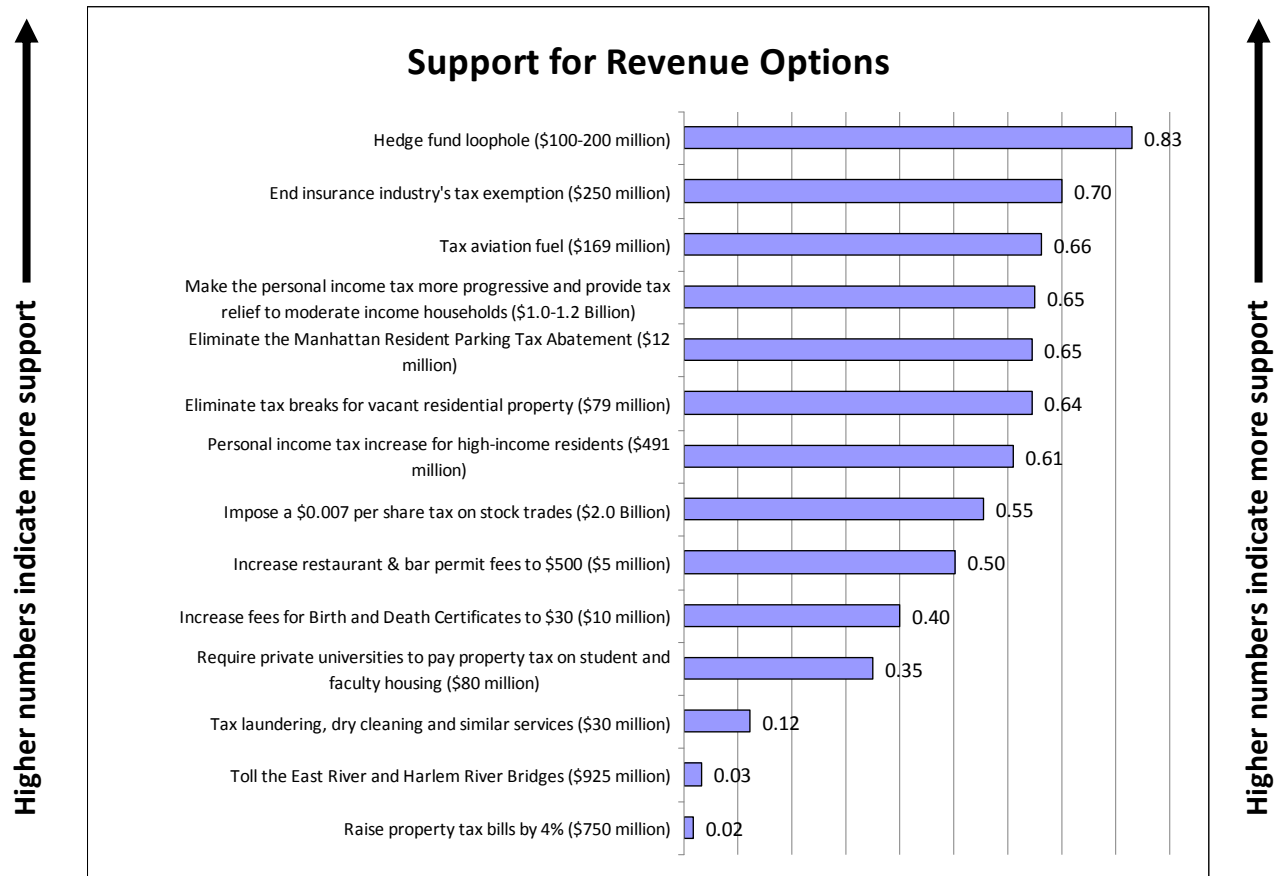
Support is much higher for proposals that raise large amounts of money, target those that have done well in recent years.

Top “Fair Share” Revenue Options That Would Increase Progressivity of Local Tax Burden

- ⇒ **Close a Loophole for Hedge Fund and Private Equity Managers A/K/A “Carried Interest”**, which would raise \$100-200 million.
- ⇒ **Remove insurance companies’ exemption from General Corporation Tax**, which would raise \$250 million.
- ⇒ **Make the NYC Personal Income Tax more progressive**, which would raise \$1.0-1.2 billion.
- ⇒ **Eliminate tax breaks for vacant residential lots**, which would raise just under \$80 million.

*Respondent from the Bronx:
We desperately need a more progressive personal income tax! The fact that I'm in the same tax bracket as Trump (and I make \$45,000/year) is criminal.*

*Respondent from Brooklyn:
I support wholeheartedly making the personal income tax more progressive, especially as incomes have become more inequitable.*



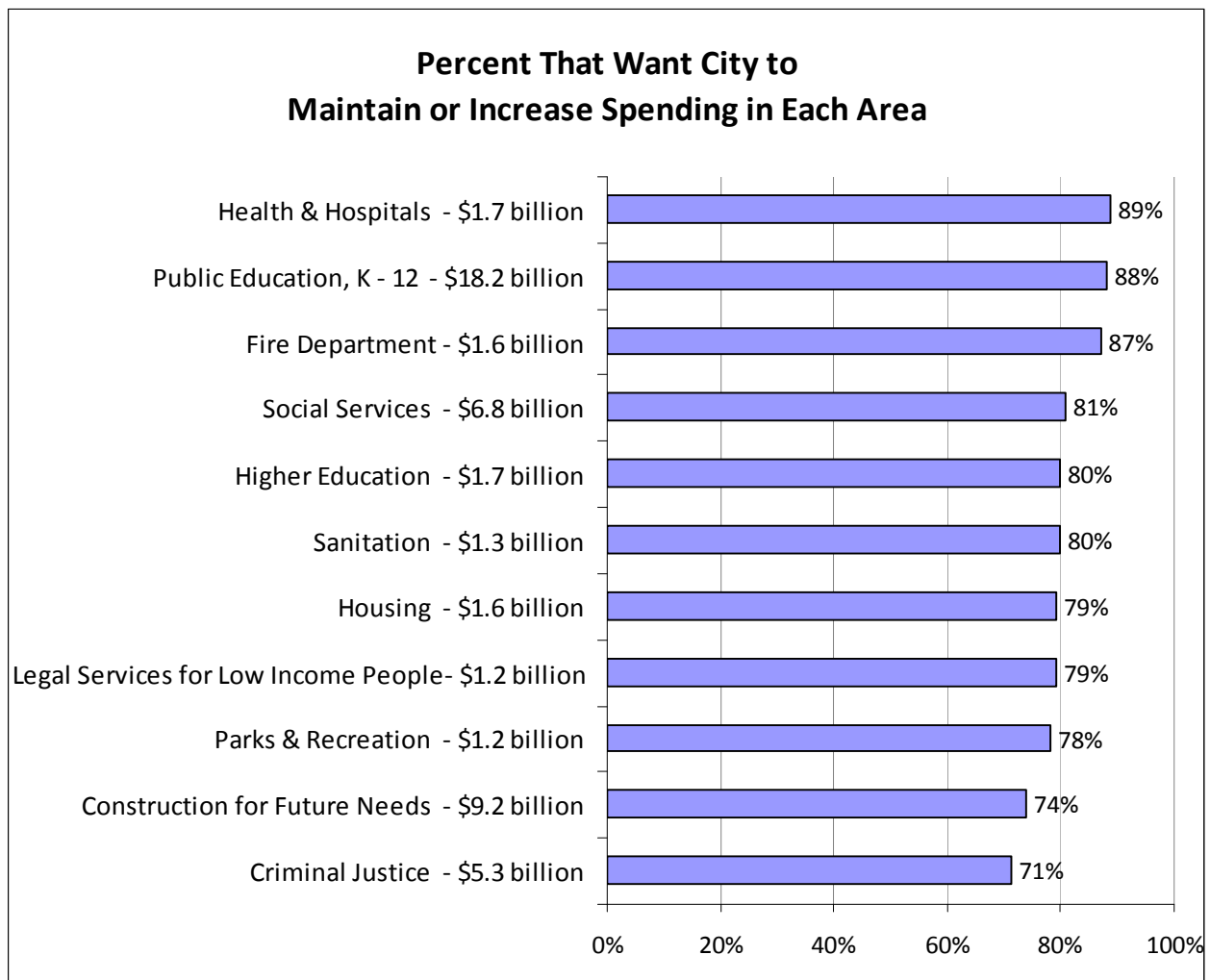
Average of responses to revenue questions, where “Yes” = 1, “Maybe” = 0, and “No” = -1. Questions asked were “Which revenue-raising options for the City would you support?” and “Which of the following options that are likely to require State approval would you support?” (Answer orders rotated)

In Tough Times, New Yorkers Still Prefer More Investment in Public Services, Not Less

Even After Being Shown the Total Spending for Each Area

*Survey Respondent from Queens:
To cut services in a time of poor economic conditions puts those already in financial straits in a worse situation.*

The Progressive Caucus recognizes budget realities — these are tough times and it is important to live within our means. But that doesn't mean people want to cut services. Nor does the public see belt-tightening, as some politicians do, to be an inherently good thing. In fact, even in these tough times, the vast majority would prefer to see investments increased in major areas. That doesn't mean we can afford increases at this moment — but we should not yield to the idea that less is better.



Percent responding "Increase Spending" or "Maintain Spending" in response to question "Which areas should the City maintain, increase, or cut current spending?" (Answer order rotated). Choices are abbreviated here for ease of display.

Other Findings of Note & Open-Ended Responses

- The prioritization of spending, cutting and revenue items in the survey were largely similar across boroughs.
- The 11% of respondents who favored cutting essential services on average were against cuts to fire companies and food pantries proposed by the Mayor.

269 people gave open-ended responses to a question asking for additional ideas:

- The most frequent suggestions to balance the budget were general or specific statements in favor of progressive taxation and consumption taxes. The most frequent suggestions for consumption taxes were congestion pricing, and “sin taxes” on fat, sweetened beverages, plastic water bottles, alcohol, tobacco, firearms, SUV or luxury cars, gasoline, fast food, and clothing.
- A number of respondents suggested ways the City could rethink the use of public streets (parking policy, smarter traffic enforcement, etc.) to increase environmental quality, make transportation more efficient and balance the budget.
- Several respondents advocated for a reduction in the use of outside consultants and private contractors as ways to achieve savings.
- Other priorities that open-ended responses supported included increased funding for libraries, immigrant/literacy services, youth services, WPA-style public works programs, transit, small businesses, and arts & culture programs.

Selected Quotes from Respondents

- “With afterschool programs being cut, and [parents] taking on extra jobs, libraries provide a safe educational space for children and teens. It is where people go for educational and job search needs and enjoyment.”
- “Wall Street caused national misery—there’s no reason why they shouldn’t pay up now when they’re booming again.”
- “Start a program like the WPA... If we have jobs program where we train people and give them work, maybe working on the infrastructure or helping with literacy efforts in public schools and with basic adult education and ESL, those individuals will be spending the money they make, which will help everyone.”
- “The Immigrant Opportunities Initiative and the Adult Literacy Initiative... are a drop in the bucket in the overall city budget... yet cuts to these services will result in even fewer immigrants getting the help they need to learn English and to access desperately needed affordable and trustworthy immigration and worker legal services.”
- “Art works—it provides jobs, drives tourism, and promotes cultural harmony.”

Methodology

The New York City Progressive Caucus polled their constituents to gain insight into how the City should deal with the current fiscal crisis. A total of 1,981 responses were collected between 4/18/2010 and 5/27/2010. Responses were collected online on surveymonkey.com and in person in district offices, and respondents were contacted by email through a variety of lists. Answer orders were rotated in three question batteries to prevent item-order bias. Item-order bias did not appear to be present in the one battery that was not rotated.