Gov. Paterson Drops The Budget Hammer: Updated »
BY CELESTE KATZ

The governor's apparently sticking with his come-hell-or-high-water approach to his Monday deadline for a state budget deal, as evidenced by this statement he just put out. What we don't know is whether it'll happen, or whether we'll (again) face the possibility of a government shutdown.

"In January, I put forward a budget proposal that reflected our time; a budget of necessity, not of choice. In my budget, I made the difficult decisions that we all know are necessary for New York to emerge from this crisis and build a strong fiscal and economic foundation.

"Today, I am taking the final step toward enacting a budget and closing the deficit. When taken with the other portions of the budget that have already been passed, the final budget will fulfill the core principles of my initial proposal: shared sacrifice combined with recurring spending reductions and responsible budgeting.

"The final budget does not borrow money to fund general operating expenses; it closes the budget deficit primarily through deep but necessary spending reductions, and includes responsible new revenue streams. This budget will help our State turn the corner toward a more hopeful and optimistic future.

"While the final budget addresses the challenges we currently face, it also provides a method for alleviating future economic duress should any unforeseen circumstances arise and jeopardize this balanced plan.

"As I have said for months, I am willing to listen to alternative solutions to New York's budget crisis, and will continue to listen to suggestions from the Legislature over the next 48 hours. However, while the door remains open for negotiation, it will not be on Albany time, where deadlines only exist to be extended or ignored. Absent a negotiated agreement with the Legislature, the emergency extender I will propose will be submitted to the Legislature for an up or down vote. New Yorkers are entitled to a final budget and they will get it on Monday, just as I promised."