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Lower Tax Urged On Higher Income

By PHILIP H. DIXON —
ALBANY, N.Y. (UPI)

State Commerce Commissioner John S. Dyson says the upper brackets of the state's income tax should be lowered a bit to make the state more attractive to top-level business leaders.

"I believe in a progressive income tax," Dyson told a Senate Labor Committee hearing Tuesday. "I don't think it should be more progressive than the federal tax."

Dyson also told the committee he would wage an all-out battle to stem the flow of industry from the state and attacked the federal government for short-changing New York financially.

Dyson said that when a corporation, prompted by high income taxes on top executives, leaves the state, "the 6 or 10 people we think we're taxing will move anyway." At the same time, he said, the numerous lower-echelon office personnel, unable to move, will be thrown out of work.

He said he had discussed the matter with Gov. Hugh L. Carey. A spokesman for Carey said the Democratic governor has taken no position on the proposal.

Dyson took over in December as head of the Commerce Department, which had been without a permanent commissioner for 11 months.

He said he has ordered his staff within the next two months to "visit each one" of the 2,300 firms in the state with more than 100 persons, to offer assistance with information or red-tape cutting.

The 32-year-old commissioner asked the legislators for aid in restoring deputy commissioner positions eliminated by the legislature.

He said his was the "only department that the legislature went through" last year item-by-item, trimming positions and cutting salaries.

"I think in a sense they merited it," Dyson said. "I don't think in recent memory they've been nearly as aggressive as they ought to have been."

He said that in the past there has "been a tendency to view the Commerce Department as a place to put politicians. It has damaged the credibility of the department."

However, Dyson said, "I just need the flexibility" to create more deputy commissionerships and increase their salaries to attract "first-rate" aides.

He said that in selecting assistants, "I will insist that they be knowledgeable, competent people of the first order. Although they will be political second, they will be first-rate first."

Dyson, formerly agriculture commissioner, also called for coordination by New York's congressional delegation to obtain a larger share of federal spending for the state.

"New York is severely short-changed in the outlay of federal funds, particularly in functional areas related either directly or indirectly to economic development," Dyson said.

He said that while the state contributes 11 per cent of

federal tax receipts, it gets back only about 8.3 per cent of federal outlays.

Dyson praised the report by an Environmental Conservation Department hearing officer Monday which said the General Electric Co. has violated state laws by discharging chemical PCB's into the Hudson River.

"I think it was a very fair report," said the commissioner, who had earlier urged that En Con compromise rather than attempt to force GE to end all PCB emission from its plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls.

Dyson praised En Con Commissioner Ogden R. Reid for agreeing to work with GE officials to attempt to find a voluntary solution to the emissions. Dyson urged such a course to prevent the company from possibly closing the plants.