



ASSEMBLYMAN Matthew Titone

Chair, Office of State-Federal Relations

New York State's Bold Budget Invests in Future

The 2016-17 state budget marks a monumental point in New York history. It's not just a spending plan, but rather a far-reaching, comprehensive plan to put families first and strongly invest in New York's future. The final budget includes a significant investment in our schools, provides New Yorkers with a minimum wage increase that will help lift countless families out of poverty, implements a long-awaited paid family leave program, and ensures our communities have safe roads and infrastructure.

The final budget included a historic raise in the minimum wage, gradually increasing it over several years with a quicker implementation in downstate counties where the cost of living is higher. For families living in New York City, the minimum wage will reach \$15 an hour on Dec. 31, 2018. For New York City businesses with 10 or fewer employees, it will reach \$15 on Dec. 31, 2019.

For Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties the minimum wage will reach \$15 on Dec. 31, 2021. And in upstate communities, the wage will reach \$12.50 on Dec. 31, 2020, then potentially increased to \$15 according to an indexed schedule set by the Division of Budget and the Department of Labor.

Additionally, paid family leave is now a reality in New York State, increasing fairness and opportunity by putting our families first. By instituting paid family leave, workers can take time off to care for a loved one without sacrificing their financial security.



Investing In Our Schools and Our Children

The 2016-17 state budget increases education aid by \$1.47 billion – or 6.3 percent – for a total of \$24.7 billion, representing the largest investment in education in New York history and highlighting the Assembly's commitment to helping every child achieve their full potential.

We owe it to our children to provide a comprehensive education that challenges and empowers them so that each and every student has the skills they need to succeed in college and build a secure life for themselves. This year's budget strengthens our public school system so that it fosters innovation, instills in all students a desire to learn and grants every child a fair shot at success.

The 2016-17 budget ensures that tuition at SUNY and CUNY schools will not be raised during the coming academic year because every New Yorker has the right to receive an affordable college education. The budget also provides an increase of \$12 million in operating funds for CUNY and an increase of \$18 million in operating funds for SUNY. By saying 'no' to tuition hikes, we are signaling our commitment to doing just that, so every New Yorker has a chance to get ahead.

Further, in a victory for the CUNY system, the budget rejects the governor's proposal to shift \$485 million of CUNY operating expenses to New York City, protecting and maintaining the quality of education and programs offered by the schools. The city of New York should not be forced to unfairly foot the bill for state costs.

Additionally, the budget allocates \$175 million to transform struggling and high-needs schools into community schools, which provide a number of crucial services to students and their families, including mentoring, health care, summer programs, and job training. By converting these schools

into community schools, they can be turned into valuable centers that provide much-needed support to at-risk youth and their families and address the issues associated with poverty, as well as help prevent the schools from being taken over by the state.

Recognizing the importance and lasting benefit of early childhood education, the budget provides \$807 million for continued implementation and development of the statewide universal pre-kindergarten program.

Putting our kids on the path to success starts in our schools. So this isn't just an investment in education, it's an investment in our communities, our economy and our future.



Discussing local issues with the Staten Island Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations.

Assembly Ethics Reforms Help Restore Integrity in Government

The Assembly passed an ethics reform proposal to increase transparency in government and to limit the influence of special interests. The legislation builds on previous Assembly Majority ethics reforms, which included the creation of a new Assembly Office of Ethics and Compliance, increased disclosure requirements, and stronger anti-bribery laws to hold corrupt public officials accountable.

While pension reform is not part of the current proposal, the Assembly Majority is committed to reaching an agreement for a constitutional amendment that would strip corrupt officials of their pensions. Taxpayers should not foot the bill to pay the pensions of officials convicted of felonies that breach the public trust. The Assembly passed legislation last year to address this issue (A.7704) and conversations are ongoing, with an agreement expected by the end of the legislative session.

I personally made ethics reform a priority by introducing a bill that would exempt communications with the press from the definition of “lobbying” and would increase transparency by giving the public more information about lobbyists’ and clients of lobbyists’ sources of funding.

It’s important that New Yorkers have trust in their government and know it’s truly working for the people. My commitment is to increase transparency, reduce conflicts of interest and get real results for the people of New York State.

Cutting Taxes for Middle-Class Families

In order to provide additional assistance to working and middle-income families, the budget will cut personal income taxes by \$270 million in 2018 compared to 2017 tax rates. These tax savings will increase to approximately \$3 billion by 2025 when the middle-class tax rate reductions are fully phased in. The cuts would incrementally reduce the middle-class tax rates for single filers earning between \$13,000 and \$200,000, heads of households earning between \$19,500 and \$250,000, and married couples earning between \$26,000 and \$300,000. Tax rates for brackets in these ranges would decrease from the current 5.9 percent, 6.45 percent and 6.65 percent to 5.5 percent, 5.5 percent and 6.0 percent respectively, over eight years. These new tax cuts will benefit up to 6 million New Yorkers.



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Battling the Heroin Epidemic

New York’s spending plan for fiscal year 2016-17 will make critical investments to fight the growing heroin and opioid epidemic in our state and help protect public health with appropriations totaling \$28 million – a significant increase over last year’s budget.

The heroin and opioid abuse crisis is hurting families in communities all throughout New York. The state budget reflects the necessary steps to stop it in its tracks and help victims get the help they desperately need to overcome their addictions.

Specifically, the approved budget includes \$25 million for the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to implement a Heroin and Opiate Treatment Prevention Package. Additionally, \$2 million has been included to support Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (SAPIS) in order to continue providing programming in New York City schools.

Further, to maintain safer communities, \$1 million has been allocated in the Department of Environmental Conservation budget to conduct local and federally approved drug collection programs, including the purchase and distribution of tamper-proof drug collection boxes. These measures will help protect the environment from harmful substances and reduce addiction through the safe and responsible disposal of opioid and pharmaceutical drugs.

The goal is to help restore the lives of those affected by drug abuse, prevent future tragedies and keep our communities safe.

Protecting Veterans

Veterans and their families have made invaluable sacrifices for our country, and so we must support veterans and ensure they have access to vital resources. This year’s state budget provides \$1.62 million in restorations and additional funding for veterans over the executive proposal, including:

- \$500,000 for the Veterans Defense Program, which provides in-depth training, support and legal assistance to veterans and service members in the New York State criminal and family court systems;
- \$200,000 for Warrior Salute, which assists veterans coping with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma;
- \$200,000 for Helmets-to-Hardhats, which connects veterans and transitioning members of the military with training and career opportunities to help ease the transition into civilian life;
- \$100,000 for the Veterans Justice Project, which provides legal services to veterans and their families;
- \$40,000 for the Vietnam Veterans of America, which helps support Vietnam veterans and their families; and

It’s our responsibility to do everything we can to honor the men and women who fought to defend our country and its values. I’m very proud to have voted for a state budget that provides vital funding for programs that help our veterans and support them as they make the transition back to civilian life once they’ve come home.



Honoring those that served. Senator Lanza and I held our 8th Annual Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration at Tottenville HS on April 17.

ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE PROVIDES FUNDING TO RICHMOND UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Staten Island's North Shore has some of the most pressing health needs in New York State, and residents have been chronically underserved. To help alleviate this Assemblyman Cusick and I have secured a million dollars in capital money for Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) to assist with the renovation and reconstruction of their emergency department. The almost half-a-century-old building housing the emergency room was designed to accommodate approximately 22,000 patients per year with average acuity, however today the emergency room receives an average of 65,000 patients per year with a significantly higher acuity. Additionally, RUMC is the only Staten Island hospital outside of a flood zone, which makes it tremendously important its upkeep is provided for.

The capital funding procured by me will help RUMC with the construction of a new Emergency Medical Services Building with an improved layout, special features, and state-of-the-art equipment and technologies that will improve patient flow, maximize clinical efficiency, and enhance patient comfort.



At a past ribbon cutting of the RUMC Patient Centered Medical Home at 800 Castleton Avenue.



Addressing the community at the 121st monthly Precinct Council Meeting.



Attending the ribbon cutting of OnYourMarks new pool, for which I secured funding.

Titone Secures Two Million in Capital Funding for New York City Housing Authority

In order to ensure residents feel safe and secure in their homes, I am pleased to announce that I was able to secure \$2 million in capital funds for improvements to security at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in my district. NYCHA's mission is to provide low- and moderate-income New Yorkers safe and affordable housing, and although they have succeeded in the latter, my funding will help with the former, as everyone deserves a safe and crime-free place to live.

Working closely with tenant association presidents and the 120 Precinct, my office was able to help prioritize needs and determine where the capital funds could be most effectively spent. The allotments will be spent at the Richmond Terrace, West

Brighton, and Cassidy-Lafayette Houses, for Layered Access Control (LAC) and the ShotSpotter system, which detects the sounds of gunshots and promptly alerts authorities.

I also secured an additional \$150,000 that has been allocated in the state budget for Operation SNUG (guns spelled backwards) on Staten Island. This is an implementation of the Cure Violence model, which approaches violence in an entirely new way: as a contagious disease that can be stopped using the same health strategies employed to fight epidemics. The Cure Violence model trains and deploys outreach workers and violence interrupters to mitigate conflict on the street before it turns violent.

Greetings from Assemblyman Matthew J. Titone

I am excited to announce many legislative accomplishments from our most recent session. Among them are ethics reforms, increased minimum wage and education funding, as well as paid family leave.

In addition to introducing 118 new pieces of legislation, locally I helped secure capital funding for organizations including the Staten Island Children's Museum and the National Lighthouse Museum and priority project funds for organizations such as the Empowerment Zone, On Your Mark, Vietnam Veterans of America, Volunteers of America, A Very Special Place, Community Resources, Angel On A Leash, and the Pride Center of Staten Island.

There is a lot more work to be done statewide as well as in our local community. I look forward to continuing to serve as your representative in the New York State Assembly!



Assemblyman Matthew Titone



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