



Dear Friends,

In the early morning hours of April 9, New York State adopted its budget for Fiscal Year 2023, covering April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023. The \$220 billion budget spans a myriad of services and programs that touch virtually every one of the 21 million residents of New York State.

My job has been to strongly press for provisions that are of the greatest concern to those whom I represent. **Thank you to all who wrote, called, and emailed me to let me know what is important to you.** And thanks to all the tireless advocates for fighting so strongly for what they believe in. All of this helps me to represent my district to the best of my abilities.

As with any large piece of legislation, compromise was necessary. And while the final budget did not contain everything for which I advocated – and indeed contained certain provisions that I would have preferred to have seen left out – I ultimately voted in favor of the budget because it provides well for the communities in my assembly district and the state as a whole.

Here are some highlights:

- **Education:** [Historic levels of funding](#) for NYS school districts. I have reviewed the estimated state aid to each of the school districts in my district, and every one of them will be receiving a substantial increase. This funding helps in holding down school property taxes.
- **The Environment & Tackling the Climate Crisis:** The budget proposes the \$4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act of 2022, which will be on the ballot for voter approval in November, and includes:
  - o \$1.5 billion for climate mitigation
  - o \$1.1 billion for restoration and flood risk reduction
  - o \$650 million for open space conservation and recreation
  - o \$650 million for water quality projects
- **Middle-Class Tax Cuts:** Accelerates the phase-in of middle-class tax cuts that began in 2018, saving taxpayers \$162 million in SFY 2022-23 and \$615 million in SFY 2023-24. Middle-class state tax rates will be the lowest in 70 years.
- **Gas Tax Holiday:** Establishes a gas tax holiday from June 1, 2022-Dec. 31, 2022, saving motorists approximately \$585 million.
- **Utility Arrearage Fund:** To aid those struggling with past due utility bills, and because people should not have to choose between keeping the lights on and putting food on the table, a utility arrearage fund in the amount of \$250 million.

- **Homeowner Tax Rebate Credit:** \$2.2 billion to create a one-year property tax rebate check for households that are eligible for School Tax Relief (STAR) and Enhanced STAR, and that have incomes at or below \$250,000.
- **Affordable Housing:** [A five-year capital plan](#) for 100,000 affordable housing units, including 10,000 supportive housing units (units with onsite services, such as for people with disabilities or formerly homeless). This capital plan is especially important to my district where every town, village, and city I represent has a dire shortage of affordable housing for seniors who wish to remain in their communities, essential workers and so many others who can't meet the high rents.
- **Transportation Infrastructure:** [\\$32.8 million for transportation infrastructure](#), including record-level investment in local roads and bridges in smaller municipalities throughout New York.
- **Childcare and Pre-K:** [Robust funding for childcare and for expanding Universal Pre-K](#). More than doubles the current investment in childcare, providing nearly \$3 billion more in childcare over the next three years alone and expanding eligibility for subsidized care.
- **Higher Education:** [\\$21.6 Billion in Higher Education funding](#), including significant funds for SUNY and CUNY.
- **Veterans:** \$7.6 million in restorations and additional funding for various veterans' programs, including \$5 million in capital funding for veterans' nonprofit organizations. It also provides **\$7.7 million to expand the Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Veteran's Support Program** statewide, which offers counseling and support for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health challenges.
- **Legal Services:** Sustained funding for legal services for veterans, individuals facing eviction, and immigrants.
- **An increase in the minimum wage for home care workers and one-time bonus payment of \$3,000 to full-time health and mental hygiene frontline workers who earn less than \$125,000 and stay in their position for a year.** These incentives are critical to our seniors and people with disabilities, as there is a severe shortage of home care workers whose low wages often force them to take higher-paying jobs at supermarkets, department stores, and with other employers. While I am disappointed that the increase included in the budget (\$3 over a two-year period) was not all that we had hoped, I do think that this budget provides a decent foundation for improvement and I will continue to fight for further increased wages
- **Libraries:** A \$3.5 million increase in aid for public libraries over the executive budget for a total of \$99.6 million – a \$5.5 million increase over last year. The budget also includes \$20 million in additional capital for library projects for a total of \$34 million. With 14 public libraries in my district, I advocated strongly for these much-needed increases.
- **Pandemic Relief:** \$1.1 billion for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and Landlord Rental Assistance Program (LRAP). \$250 million to create a refundable tax credit program to help small businesses cover COVID-19-related expenses, offering a minimum credit of \$1,000 per business.
- **Mental Health Services:** Provides at least \$50 million for mental health services, addiction services, and services for people with disabilities. Provides an increase of \$53 million for children's mental health programs under the state's Office of Mental Health (OMH).

**Some other notable provisions in the budget include:**

***Changes to Bail Reform***

While there has been a great deal of discussion regarding bail reform, and modifications were made during this year's budget process, the basic tenets for the 2019 reforms remain valid: too many people, especially people of color, were held awaiting trial because they couldn't make bail (an estimated 80% in Riker's Island fall into that category). The 2019 changes were to address what had been two systems of justice – one for the poor and another for those with the money to post bail.

The changes which were made through this year's budget process provide greater judicial discretion, including with regard to repeat offenders and those charged with gun possession or gun trafficking, as well as in situations where defendants appear to need mental health treatment. The bulk of the reforms remains intact.

***Permanent Changes to Open Meeting Laws***

The budget makes permanent the ability for public bodies (such as county and town boards, city councils, and school boards), following the adoption of a local law or resolution, to meet virtually - something that has become quite popular in light of the pandemic. However, there are also important qualifications to ensure that the meetings are transparent, including the requirement that a quorum of the public body still meets in person, that the public is likewise able to participate remotely, and that all members of the public body must be in view and be able to be heard by the public.

It's a hybrid approach that allows for greater public participation while preserving open and transparent government.

***To-Go Cocktails Legalized for Three Years***

During the height of the pandemic, to-go cocktails were temporarily legalized in NYS, providing critical income to businesses at a time when in-person dining was shut down or heavily curtailed. This year's budget [brings back the popular option](#) for three years, after which time it can be re-evaluated. The law prohibits establishments from selling full bottles of wine or liquor to go, and the drinks may only be sold in conjunction with a substantial food order, and in a sealed container.

If you have any questions about the budget or any other related issue, please reach out to my office at [burdickc@nyassembly.gov](mailto:burdickc@nyassembly.gov) or call us at (914) 244-4450.

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Finally, I would be remiss in not addressing the arrest and subsequent resignation of former Lieutenant Governor Brian Benjamin. This is an unfortunate situation and now a matter for the criminal justice system; however, I will say that I am relieved for the people of NYS that his resignation came swiftly.

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## [Join Us on April 27th in Celebrating Our 2022 Women of Distinction](#)

As I mentioned in a [previous newsletter](#), it came as no surprise to any of us that there were so many accomplished women in the 93rd Assembly District. **Please join us on April 27th at 6:30 pm via Facebook Live, as we celebrate this year's honorees.** I am honored to be joined by special guest, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins.

### Assemblymember Chris Burdick's 2022

#### WOMEN OF DISTINCTION AWARDS



Join Us on Facebook Live!  
[FB.com/ChrisBurdickAD93](https://www.facebook.com/ChrisBurdickAD93)  
Wednesday, April 27th @ 6:30 pm

#### Honoring

Samantha Banerjee	Midge Iorio	Jessica Reinmann
Lisa Bart	Peggy Jett	Dolores Rotolo
Ker Beckley	Lisa Katz	Shaina Rotstein
Jennifer Bernhard	Andromeda Turre Klein	Cynthia Ryan
Dawn Brown-Berenson	Jodi Kimmel	Karen Schleimer
Ekaterina Castano	Kristen Lawton	Jill Shapiro
Laurie Ciavardini	Gerri Mariano	Lianne Sorkin
Beth Vetare Civitello	Anne Mayhew	Elizabeth Soyk
Terry Degatano	Cecilia McKenney	Lateasha Stapleton
Barbara DiGiacinto	Jonette Mines	Nicole Sturomski
Jean Farber	Ellie Mocas	Pam Veith
Susan Geffen	Lori Gowen Morton	Katherine Vockins
Dawn Greenberg	Clare Murray	Susan Elion Wollin
Jackie Greer	Karine Patiño	Catherine Wynkoop
	Charlene Raynor	

As always, if there are any issues that you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [burdickc@nyassembly.gov](mailto:burdickc@nyassembly.gov) (or simply reply to this email). **Please also follow me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) for the most up-to-date information.**

Miss any of our previous newsletters? You can [find them here](#).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Burdick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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