



January 24, 2025

Greetings –

On Tuesday, Governor Hochul released the FY 2026 Executive Budget formally kicking off the State’s budget process. In the coming weeks the Legislature will be reviewing and holding hearings on the Governor's proposals and then engage in negotiations with the Governor until an agreement is reached and the budget passed. The Legislature will also be continuing to advance policy outside of the budget process.

Legislative Update

This week I joined my Assembly colleagues in acting decisively to continue to strengthen reproductive rights by passing two bills: ([A.2145-A](#)) would increase privacy protections for doctors dispensing medications by replacing the prescriber’s name with the name of the practice. This would allow New York prescribers to provide care for their patients out of state without fear of direct legal action; ([A.2141-A](#)) would provide additional protections for electronic health information. This includes information that is stored by cellphones, smart watches and information collected over the internet through purchases or search history. This legislation protects information that is not already protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), including information collected in the pursuit of reproductive healthcare access.

As Chair of the Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, I will be working to ensure that libraries throughout the State get the resources needed through the budget process to continue and strengthen their role as vital institutions and hubs for learning for people of all ages. This week I introduced a bill to ensure that libraries are treated fairly when it comes to the purchase of e-books and will be looking to develop and advance other bills to support the work of both public and school libraries.

Following up on [the report of the New York State Task Force on Dyslexia and Dysgraphia](#), which was created through legislation I authored, I have introduced a bill ([A.2687](#)) that would establish a Center for Dyslexia and Dysgraphia within the State Education Department. The concept of a center was one of the Task Force's recommendations and would provide leadership and coordination around the State's efforts to address the needs of children with dyslexia and related learning disabilities.

Another new bill that I just introduced and would like to highlight is [A.806](#), which would provide property tax rebates for property owners including small homeowners for projects such as rain gardens that would help reduce flooding and combined sewer overflow. Climate change has made flood risk no longer exclusive to those who live along waterfronts or in the floodplain and extreme weather events are projected to increase. I have heard from many constituents about the issues they are facing with flooding and this bill is one measure to help address such issues.

FY 2026 Executive Budget Update

The Governor framed her budget proposals as intended to relieve financial strain on families. I believe such proposals deserve serious consideration, but caution is in order to be sure that one-time tax rebates and tax breaks don't come at the expense of necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure that are essential to the present and future well-being of State residents. I have long been an advocate for universal childcare and welcome the Governor's commitment to work with the legislature to find a "path" to accomplish this, but much more detail is needed.

Notably missing from the Governor's budget announcement was a sense of urgency on climate change. No clarity was provided regarding the implementation of a cap and invest program, a key element necessary for New York to achieve its goals on climate change and renewable energy. There was also no mention of the NY HEAT Act, legislation needed to move homes from gas to renewables. I will be continuing to advocate for the NY HEAT Act, a strong cap and invest program that meets community needs, and other climate change measures.

More updates to come as the budget process moves forward.

Apply for a NYC Neighborhood Grant through CitizensNYC

In early November, CitizensNYC re-opened its grant applications for 2025. They have two application periods this year, and the first application deadline is coming on February 7th. Here are the grants being offered:

Community Leaders Grant: Grants of up to \$5,000 to community building projects carried out by resident-led groups to improve neighborhood life, strengthen local leadership, and scale community partnerships.

Neighborhood Business Grant: Grants of up to \$5,000 for small businesses who are “doing well by doing good” in their neighborhood. These awards can provide funding to support the wide range of initiatives your business undertakes to positively impact your community, especially those that are custom-tailored to meet the local needs you see. The first application deadline for these grants is coming up on February 7th. Their second grant cycle will open on May 5th and run through July 25th, so if you don't make it into this round, you can certainly apply during CitizensNYC’s second cycle this year. If you have questions, you can email CitizensNYC at grants@citizensnyc.org for community grants and businessgrants@citizensnyc.org for business grants. You can learn more about them on their Web site.

If you have any concerns about any legislative or community issue, please email me at carrollr@nyassembly.gov or call (718) 788-7221.

-Bobby

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