



Assemblyman **Robert J. Rodriguez**



SPRING 2019

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Budget Update

FY 2020 New York State Budget Passed

On April 1st the New York State Assembly, after much negotiation and discussion, passed a \$175.5 billion State budget for FY 2020. I want to thank the advocacy and community groups that reached out to my office throughout this process. We worked tirelessly on your behalf to ensure your needs were met through this year's budget. While some of our priorities did not make it into the budget, they remain a priority for me, and I will continue fighting throughout the legislative session.

Investing in our Transportation Infrastructure

Tolling the Central Business District aka Congestion Pricing

New York State has set the precedent on changing the way we think about transit. The enacted budget includes a plan for congestion pricing that is the first of its kind in the United States. The plan will improve traffic conditions and provide a funding stream to the MTA.

How much will the tolls cost?
A review board will be instituted to provide recommendations on toll amounts, oversight on tolls and exemptions and to provide recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this program.

Where and when will the tolls be placed?
In the Central Business District, South of 60th Street in Manhattan not including FDR drive. The tolling could begin as early as 2021.

How much revenue will this raise?
The congestion pricing tolls will generate at least \$15 billion in bonded capital.

What will the revenue be used for?
The revenue will be "lock boxed," this means all revenue from tolls will be used for the MTA's capital needs.

Further MTA reforms were also granted by the budget to require additional oversight to account for institutional mismanagement and to improve effectiveness of the city's public transit. The MTA will now be subject to independent audits to manage agency efficiency and requires public reporting of MTA performance metrics. The budget calls for major construction review unit

to provide an additional perspective and recommendations for enhancements from outside experts, implements a 20-year capital needs assessment, increases the threshold for competitive procurement from \$100,000 to \$1 million, and establishes a 30-day review notice for comptroller contract approval. In addition, the enacted budget requires any capital project totaling over \$25 million in implementation costs to utilize design-build strategies.



Second Avenue Subway

Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway received \$1.235 billion in funding from the 2015-2019 MTA Capital Plan, and \$500 million in the 2020-2025 Plan. For its completion, the project seeks \$2 billion from the Federal Transit Administration and an additional \$4 billion from State. Construction on the Second Avenue Subway is projected to begin in late 2019 to open for revenue service between 2027-2029.

Health



Boriken Neighborhood Health Center

The budget codifies the Affordable Care Act and Health Exchange, protecting New Yorkers under its provisions from changes at the federal level. In addition, New York showed its commitment to fighting the opioid epidemic by expanding access to medications that prevent Opioid Use Disorder relapses such as Buprenorphine, and expanding affordability and access to substance abuse recovery programs and medication assisted programs both to the public and within the criminal justice system to decrease recidivism.

Medicaid restorations: The 2019-2020 budget has reaffirmed New York's commitment to its leadership in equitable access to affordable, high quality health care. The budget restores \$641 million in Medicaid cuts, including funding for hospitals and nursing homes to account for a 2% rate increase, and \$34 million in funding to public health programs. Priorities include:

- \$4 million for prevention of maternal mortality
- \$16 million in contingency funding for potential changes to Federal Family Planning grants
- \$3.82 million for School Based Health Centers and,
- Expedites the award of \$300 million in capital funding to support health care facilities.
- Expanded insurance coverage for in-vitro fertilization coverage and required fertility preservation treatments in all markets

Education

The 2019-2020 budget fights for our State's students and ensures our schools have the resources needed to succeed. We have increased school aid by \$1 billion, bringing the total school aid to a record \$27.86 billion. Additionally, we are committing to education equity by providing for the state's poorest schools by investing an increase of \$618 million for Foundation Aid, for a total of \$18.4 billion. Additional key allocations listed below:

- \$50 million for Community School Aid, for a total of \$250 million
- \$2 million to improve school climate, anti-bullying efforts
- \$1.5 million for mental health grants for middle schools
- \$15 million increase in funding for Pre K grants, total of \$822 million
- \$18 million ongoing funding for My Brother's Keeper initiative. A total of \$74 million has been allocated since program's creation. The Initiative focuses on family and community engagement, professional development, restorative justice, addresses racial disparities and scales + develops best practices
- \$14 million for Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers

- \$103.9 million for Schools for the Blind and Deaf
- \$2.3 million to eliminate remaining student costs under the reduced-priced meal program
- \$1.5 million restoration for the Consortium for Worker Education
- Restores \$5 million for public libraries, total \$96.6 million



Higher Education

We are committed to ensuring New Yorkers have access to higher education. We have restored necessary funding to our key programs that connect low-income students to funding and other resources that ensure student success.

- EOP \$32.2 million, a \$5.4 million restoration
- SEEK \$28.1 million
- College Discovery \$1.3 million
- HEOP \$35.5 million
- Liberty Partnerships \$18.4 million
- Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) \$15.8 million
- Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), \$11.9 million
- Restores \$1.1 million at SUNY and \$902,000 at CUNY for child care centers

- \$6 million restoration for the Educational Opportunity Center
- \$1 million for Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) labs within SUNY.
- \$2.5 million CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)
- \$1.5 million for the School of Labor and Urban Studies
- \$500,000 Telecounseling and Mental Health Services at SUNY
- \$700,000 Small Business Development Center

Jose Peralta New York State Dream Act will create a pathway for higher education for undocumented students by funding \$27 million to open access to Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

Criminal Justice

For too long our criminal justice system has punished and denied justice to New Yorkers through antiquated laws. Through budget negotiations, we have been able to make substantial changes to our criminal justice process that will ensure justice and fairness.

Changes to Cash Bail, Discovery Rules and Speedy Trial

The state budget eliminates cash bail for most misdemeanors, excluding sex offense misdemeanors, and non-violent felonies. The legislation also requires police officers to issue desk appearance tickets instead of making an arrest for most misdemeanors and Class E felonies.

To ensure fairness, the legislation provides for automatic, routine and scheduled disclosure (case evidence). Prosecutors will be required to provide evidence to the defense within 15 days of arraignment. Additionally, in an effort to reduce unnecessary delays, courts will inquire and determine whether the speedy trial clock should continue to run once prosecutors state they are ready for trial.

Successful Reentry

The state budget also eliminates some of the barriers to successful reentry post release, for example, individuals will have access to a greater number of employment and licensing opportunities.



Protecting Our Environment

Plastic Bags Ban

Following in the footsteps of California and Hawaii in advocating for more rigorous environmental policy, the enacted budget includes legislation banning the use of single-use plastic bags and authorizing cities and counties to impose a fee on the distribution of paper bags by stores and other businesses. Sixty percent of these revenues will be directed to the State's Environmental Protection Fund while the other 40% will be invested to help cities and counties provide reusable shopping bags, especially for low and fixed-income families.

Clean Water Infrastructure

We protected clean water by adding an additional \$500 million that will fund efforts to protect clean water across the state.

Meeting the Needs of the Community

Human Services

We missed the mark in securing some important funding like COLA increases for our human services providers. However, we were able to allocate key funding for our most vulnerable.

- Wage increases for direct care worker and clinical staff, total of \$80 million
- \$33.04 million for afterschool programming
- \$1.5 million for the Disability Advocacy Program
- \$2 million refugee resettlement support
- \$350,000 for people from Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands that have resettled in New York
- \$69 million for Pay for Success, programming that uses social impact bonds to pay for outcomes in workforce development, early childhood development, child welfare, health care and public safety
- \$15 million to increase funding for Expanded In-home Services
- \$21.25 million in funding for veteran programs

Marijuana Legalization

Provisions for the legalization of cannabis in New York State were notably left out of the 19-20 budget. The social justice issues and concerns of small-businesses in terms of creating a cannabis economy that only serves the interests of large corporations heavily factored into this decision. The legalization of recreational marijuana must be implemented equitably, safely, and in a manner that addresses criminal justice within drug policy.

Cultural Capital

The Assembly proposed an allocation of \$20 million for an Arts and Cultural Facilities Improvement Program that would provide facility enhancement grants to small and mid-size organizations. We also recommended the creation of an Arts and Culture Stabilization Fund to support community based cultural organizations with operating budgets under \$6 million and that are grounded in historically

underserved communities. Although these programs could help community-based nonprofits strengthen and encourage long-term stability, job creation, tourism and economic activity, these proposals were excluded from the enacted budget. I remain committed to the arts and culture and will continue to support the work of our great arts institutions.

Census 2020



The Assembly is **fighting to ensure each and every New Yorker is counted in the 2020 Census**

#NYSAssemblyMajority
#NYSBudget
#2020Census



As the co-chair of the Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment, I advocated that the State fully fund the 2020 Census count. We did not get the full amount we asked for, but we were able to secure \$20 million to fund outreach efforts for the upcoming Census count.

Election Reform

In an effort to implement the election reform package passed in February, we have allocated the following funding to election reforms:

- \$24.7 million to update local and state boards of elections
- \$14.7 million in capital dollars + \$10 million for early voting

- Computer generated voter registration lists (electronic poll books)
- Uniformed polling hours across counties
- Voter Enfranchisement Modernization Act, establishing online voter registration systems

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Assemblymember
Robert J. Rodriguez

**Reports
to the People**

Budget Update 2019

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