



IN ALBANY

A State Budget That Benefits All New Yorkers

I was proud to vote for a budget that included real support for families and workers, as well as middle-class and low-income New Yorkers. Here are a few highlights from the budget:

- **Reducing taxes on the middle class** with rate cuts for more than 8 million taxpayers and the lowest state income tax rate in decades
- **Making child care more affordable** with a \$2.2-billion investment in affordable child care, including \$110 million to build new facilities and repair existing sites, and an additional \$400 million in Child Care Assistance Program subsidies for families, as well as \$825+ million in tax relief through the Empire State Child Tax Credit
- **Providing free school breakfast and lunch for all students** in New York schools
- **Expanding career-training opportunities with tuition-free community college** for students ages 25-55 who want to pursue careers in high-demand fields
- **Increasing money for local road repairs** with \$50 million more for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS)
- **Helping small businesses** through the elimination of \$8-billion Covid-related unemployment insurance surcharge debt to give small-business owners needed relief

My Bills

[A2736](#) Requires that any proposed capital expense included in a utility's rate increase request is fully and publicly explained, including its purpose, cost, and benefit to ratepayers. Utilities receive a greater return on capital expenses, so transparency is essential for the Public Service Commission to make the correct decision on rate increase applications. *Passed both houses of the Legislature.*

[A5969](#) Limits when utilities may do estimated billing and prohibits consecutive estimated bills. *Passed both houses of the Legislature.*

[A5031](#) Requires banks in New York to tell customers why their account is closing 60 days prior to being closed; ensures checks are honored and remaining funds are returned. Customers will have time to make new arrangements and avoid bouncing checks. *Passed the Assembly.*

[A5234](#) Prevents judicial candidates of one political party from automatically being allowed to run as a candidate in another party's primary election. *Passed the Assembly.*



VIDEO: Explaining my bill (A2736) requiring utilities to disclose any capital expenses included in rate increase requests. I spoke after the Assembly passed the bill.

FIGHTING FOR MY CONSTITUENTS

Calling for Investigation into Optum Health

I've called on Attorney General Letitia James and the State Health Department to investigate Optum Health, as it continues to snap up health care providers around the Hudson Valley.

Optum Health is a subsidiary of UnitedHealthcare, the largest health insurance company in the United States. It has taken over much of the region's health care service through mergers and acquisitions, including CareMount Medical in 2022 and Crystal Run Healthcare in 2023. These moves were approved based on claims from Optum that they would improve care for patients.

Instead, patients say they've been experiencing longer wait times for appointments and more difficulty receiving timely care. This collection of various parts of the health care system under one large company, including competing health providers, stifles competition and leaves patients with few options.

I've requested that the Attorney General investigate whether these moves constitute monopolistic and anti-competitive practices.

FAST FACTS

Central Hudson, which serves my entire Assembly District 104, is proposing the following rate increases:

Electric	Gas
Year 1 - 3.12%	Year 1 - 5.19%
Year 2 - 3.48%	Year 2 - 7.20%
Year 3 - 3.57%	Year 3 - 7.37%
10+% Total	20+% Total

Opposing Central Hudson's Endless Rate Hikes

Less than a year after Central Hudson increased its rates, the utility is back for more. Just last year, it requested a rate increase of more than 25%, but the Public Service Commission (PSC) instead approved a 5% increase that went into effect last July.

This time, the utility is asking for three consecutive years of rate hikes. But I'm calling on the PSC to reject the proposal.

The proposed rate is 1.5 times the rate of inflation, and the annual return on equity (basically how much profit it can earn for shareholders) would be 9.5% — the greatest ever. It's good for shareholders of Central Hudson's parent company Fortis, but not for customers.

Another increase would put even more strain on household budgets. That's why I'll keep fighting to protect customers from another unaffordable spike in their utility bills.

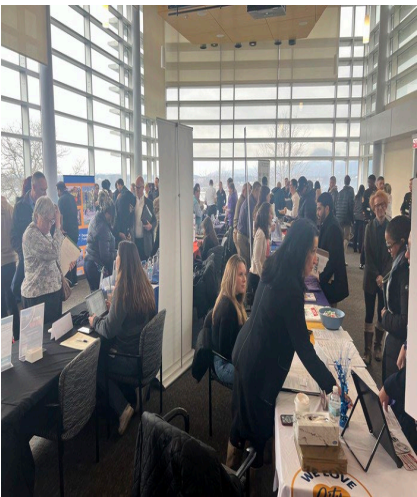
AROUND THE DISTRICT

Two Successful Job Fairs This Year

There are job opportunities out there, but it can be hard for job-seekers and employers to connect. So I was glad to host two job fairs this year, including a Civil Service Job Fair in Newburgh and a Spring Job Fair in Poughkeepsie.

Run in partnership with the NYS Department of Labor (DOL), both job fairs brought in more than 70 agencies and local businesses, as well as 250+ job-seekers. In-person experiences like these are better than just sending a resume through an anonymous online portal. Applicants and employers can speak to each other, answer questions, and make real connections. It's a critical first step to landing a job!

To learn about upcoming job fairs and other career opportunities, [visit the DOL Career Calendar](#).



Newburgh Pool is Officially Open!



Even the rain couldn't stop us from celebrating the opening of the Delano-Hitch Aquatic Center in Newburgh on May 23rd!

This incredible \$15-million aquatic center is a great example of collaboration between many officials and agencies. And the best part? It was paid for entirely through grants — including \$8 million from the state's Investment in More Swimming program and \$7 million from the city's federal American Rescue Plan funding. This means no cost to local taxpayers.

The center is open 6 days a week, 8am-8pm, and features a competition-sized pool, splash pad, restrooms, and concessions. It's a perfect place for kids to get outside, stay active and enjoy the summer.

To visit get a daily or season pass, go to cityofnewburgh.recdesk.com/Community/Membership



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