



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Governor's Proposed Budget a Mixed Bag

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"My district is one of the largest in New York State with 4,139 square miles. Yet, from one end to the other, the concerns I hear from my constituents are remarkably similar: taxes, education and jobs.

Listening to Governor Cuomo's budget address through that filter, there were encouraging proposals. I was glad to hear him advocate for making the state's property tax cap permanent, a measure Senate Republicans have pushed for several years.

Also encouraging was his statement that he intends to support the next phase of the historic middle-class tax cuts that our Conference championed and that kicked off in 2018. When fully enacted, these cuts will bring New York's tax rate to its lowest level in 70 years. Republican members have other tax-reduction proposals that we will bring to the budget discussion as the process moves forward.

Our children should benefit from world-class educational opportunities, which is why I was pleased that the Governor has proposed a nearly \$1 billion increase for our schools, a 3.6 percent rise over last year. His commitment to give priority to the neediest districts is important for rural areas like ours. We will also be working to ensure that funding to our hospitals and health care system will support the quality and access that New Yorkers need and deserve.

There is a great need in our region and in several communities across the state for the property tax compensation fund the Governor mentioned, which would assist communities affected by power plant closures. This is reassuring for the City of Dunkirk, which continues

to require support in the wake of NRG's plant closure and its July decision to withdraw from the repowering project.

Infrastructure investment is critical for our aging upstate communities, which have some of the oldest roads and bridges in the state. The Governor's pledge of \$4.43 billion for these transportation networks is crucial to supporting economic development and job growth and assuring the safety of our residents.

The Governor's address also included proposals that I oppose such as legalizing marijuana, which poses very real health and safety concerns and using taxpayer dollars to fund political campaigns. At a time when we are facing a \$3 billion deficit and many more pressing fiscal priorities, allocating hundreds of millions of dollars for public campaign financing does not make sense.

In the coming days, I will be analyzing the details of this \$175 billion spending plan and its impact, both positive and negative, on the hardworking taxpayers that I represent. While the role of the Republican Conference in the budget and legislative process has changed, my commitment to fight for fairness and equity for my district and upstate New York is stronger than ever."