



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mario R. Mattera

The Mattera Report: Fighting for Fairness in New York's Budget

MARIO R. MATTERA January 26, 2024

| ISSUE: **2023-24 NEW YORK STATE BUDGET, SCHOOL AID, SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE, STUDENTS, PROTECTING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS**



As your New York State Senator, I am committed to representing the interests of our residents and bringing your voice to Albany. Today, I want to address a pressing issue that deeply concerns me—the recently proposed budget by Governor Hochul. I have had numerous conversations with residents and our region is being shortchanged by the budget and by the misplaced priorities in Albany.

During the recent press conference at Kings Park High School where Governor Hochul touted her 2024-25 budget plan, I could not help feeling a sense of irony. The very school we were in had just found out that they would be facing a reduction in state school aid—a devastating blow during a time of rampant inflation.

For just Kings Park, this cut will create an \$800,000 gap and force them to make complex decisions. In fact, in our region the Cold Spring Harbor, Elwood, Harborfields, Northport-East Northport and Smithtown school districts all see a loss in Foundation Aid in the proposed budget. If these numbers are included in the final budget, these schools and others may need to cut services for our children, increase taxes on homeowners, or lay off teachers and staff. It is a burden that our schools should not have to bear, especially considering the proposed budget's size—over \$233 billion, a 4% increase over the previous year.

As highlighted in Newsday, the proposed budget will cost schools in Suffolk County over \$33 million in lost aid, with the total cut to Long Island schools exceeding \$40 million. This massive reduction in education aid is unacceptable. Long Island should not be treated like New York's ATM and the state should invest in all our children.

What is even more troubling is that a massive portion of the proposed budget - \$2.4 billion - is allocated to address the ongoing migrant situation. To be clear, this is a federal issue that has now trickled down to affect our students and teachers. It is time for New York State to put an end to sanctuary city policies that have contributed to this crisis.

I had the opportunity to speak directly with Governor Hochul during her event in Kings Park and conveyed the concern of our residents to her. They are rightly concerned about these aid cuts and about the ongoing migrant fiasco and I clearly delivered that message when we had the opportunity to speak.

Every Long Island school deserves a fair share of education aid and I am dedicated to ensuring that our region gets what it deserves. Governor Hochul's proposal is just that—a proposal. I pledge to work closely with the Senate Republican Conference to fight for a fair budget that serves the interests of all Long Island residents and students.

As the budget negotiations progress in the coming months, I will stand alongside my colleagues in the Senate Republican Conference to ensure that common sense prevails. We will advocate for a budget that is not only sensible and sound but also fair to all regions of the state. And I look forward to speaking to Governor Hochul again to bring the voice of our region directly to her.

I want to thank everyone who has reached out to my office about the budget proposal to offer their input. Your voice is invaluable and I share your concerns wholeheartedly. Together, we can strive for a brighter future for all of Long Island and I invite everyone to voice their thoughts by emailing my office at mattera@nysenate.gov.

Please also visit my Facebook page by [clicking here](#) to tell Governor Hochul that Long Island is not New York State's ATM and that our students, teachers and homeowners deserve our FAIR SHARE OF EDUCATION AID!!