



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Legislature Must Prioritize Affordability and Public Safety in New State Budget

PATRICK GALLIVAN March 28, 2025

| ISSUE: **NYS BUDGET, AFFORDABILITY; HIGH TAXES; STATE SPENDING**



We are just days away from the April first deadline for a new state budget. The governor and the legislature have spent the past two months negotiating a spending plan that is expected to exceed a quarter of a trillion dollars. Unfortunately, there appears to be little talk among legislative leaders and others in the majority about making New York more affordable and safer for residents and businesses.

When the governor unveiled her \$252 billion proposal back in January, it represented a nearly \$9 billion increase from last year. At the time, I expressed concern about the state spending more than it could afford and the burden it would place on taxpayers. But instead of looking for ways to control spending, leaders in the Senate upped the ante, proposing a budget that totals \$259 billion. That is an incredible 12.7 percent year-to-year spending increase. If enacted as is, the state budget will have increased nearly \$90 billion over the past 7 years. During that time, the state's population has remained flat. The increases are simply unsustainable.

While many New York families are being forced to tighten their belts to make ends meet, these budget proposals do little to make our state more affordable. If we are serious about lowering the financial burden families and businesses face, we should take steps to reduce the size and cost of government, cut spending and lower taxes.

One of the most expensive parts of the proposed budget is related to the HEAT Act, which pushes for the eventual elimination of natural gas in favor of electricity. Combined with the Climate Leadership Community Protection Act (CLCPA), which further mandates how New Yorkers heat their homes and the kind of cars they drive; we all face higher costs and fewer choices. This one-size-fits-all approach is unachievable, cost-prohibitive, and unsustainable.

I am equally concerned that the current legislative budget proposal does not adequately address public safety and the rights of law-abiding citizens. It fails to reform the state's discovery laws that have made it more difficult for prosecutors to get dangerous criminals off our streets. It also fails to repeal the state's disastrous bail laws which allow individuals who are a danger to the community and charged with serious crimes to be released from jail, including many with prior convictions. Some of them have re-offended, victimizing residents and making our communities less safe.

Despite the dangerous crisis that unfolded in our state prisons in recent weeks, the budget plan does nothing to repeal or suspend the state's HALT Act, which severely restricts the use of segregated confinement for inmates who break the rules and engage in violent behavior. Equally concerning, the proposal under consideration would also clear the way for additional prison closures, a step that will further undermine public safety and harm regional economies.

In these final days before a new budget is adopted, I will continue to fight for a fiscally responsible plan that helps to make our state more affordable, stronger, and safer.