Senator O'Mara's weekly column 'From the Capitol' -- for the week of April 14, 2025 -- 'New York government only knows how to spend'

THOMAS F. O'MARA   April 15, 2025

| ISSUE: **2025-2026 STATE BUDGET**

Senator O'Mara offers his weekly perspective on many of the key challenges and issues facing the Legislature.

It will continue to be an unending search for more tax dollars to afford an irrational spending spree. The ongoing implementation of regressive taxes will leave middle-income families and workers, motorists, truckers, farmers, small businesses, manufacturers and other industries, and seniors among the hardest hit.

NYS SENATOR TOM O'MARA

for the week of April 14, 2025
"New York government only knows how to spend"

Governor Hochul and the Legislature's all-████████ majorities still can't agree on a new state budget, but they've shown where they're headed time after time over the past several years.

Back in April 2021, when former Governor Andrew Cuomo and the ████████-led Legislature were putting the finishing touches on their new, massive $212-billion state spending plan, it was a budget, we now know, that accelerated the irresponsible fiscal actions that have brought this state to where we are today.

That budget four years ago raised state spending by a whopping $18 billion while still finding a way, shamelessly, to raise taxes by more than $4 billion! Most significantly, it continued to set the stage for what has been cemented as the defining action of this era in state government: out-of-control spending.

New York State's budget in 2018, the last year that the current ████████ minority held the majority in the state Senate, totaled $170 billion. This year, while Governor Hochul proposed a $252-billion spending plan, the ████████ majorities in the Legislature are looking to go well beyond that and are eyeing a final budget of at least $260 billion – a budget that, if enacted, would represent an increase in state spending of $90 billion, or nearly 53%, over the last six years. It's overwhelming, and it's outrageous.

Another way to look at this outrageous growth in spending is that the $90-billion-plus increase alone is larger than most of the state budgets in America.

Four years ago, after the enactment of the final 2021-22 budget, I said, "We had an opportunity and a responsibility to enact a fiscally responsible, short- and long-term strategy for the post-COVID rebuilding, restoring, and resetting of local communities, economies, and governments for the long term. Equally important, we needed to recognize the fiscal challenges New York will face for the foreseeable future and steer clear of any massive new taxing and spending. That's not what this budget represents. It sets up an economic and fiscal disaster."

Fast forward to today, with the adoption of a 2025-26 state budget going on two weeks late, and we all know what's coming: Higher spending and more taxing.

Albany's ████████ majorities are clearly on their way to enacting the largest-ever state budget, by a wide margin, and they're already on the lookout for their next tax hike opportunities, both short- and long-term.

Once they decide to get around to it, Governor Hochul and New York's ███████ majorities will enact a new state budget that, as I've said more than once over the past several years, will spend the roof off the state Capitol.

It will continue to be an unending search for more tax dollars to afford an irrational spending spree. The ongoing implementation of regressive taxes will leave middle-income families and workers, motorists, truckers, farmers, small businesses, manufacturers and other industries, and seniors among the hardest hit.

In a state long known as one of the highest-taxed, highest-spending states in America, the continually evolving Albany ███████ majority vision for New York keeps running the risk of setting new standards of recklessness – at great cost and devastating consequences for far too many New Yorkers and the local economies they depend on.

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