



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo statement on state budget

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 9, 2025

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“This year’s state budget - the latest in 15 years, negotiated behind closed doors with no transparency or public scrutiny and then passed through a bad process - is an example of the perils of one-party control and no checks and balances in Albany.

It is yet another sign that dysfunction has returned to the Capitol under the leadership of the legislative majorities and governor.

At a time when most New Yorkers and their families are tightening their belts, changing their lifestyles and making tough choices because of financial difficulties, the Democratic majorities continue to spend at unsustainable levels.

Totaling approximately \$254 billion, this year's budget - more than it costs to run Florida and Texas combined, despite New York having less population - is an increase of approximately \$11 billion over last year.

While there were aspects of this budget that I did agree with such as funding for libraries, infrastructure improvements, free breakfast and lunch in schools and SUNY Upstate Medical University, the majorities have chosen to raise taxes, implement more burdensome regulations and unreasonable mandates, utilize taxpayer dollars to pay personal legal fees for public officials, close prisons and use short-term solutions to try to fix major problems that they have created while they have controlled state government.

There was little meaningful relief in this budget, and it does not adequately address the critical economic, affordability and public safety challenges facing our state. One-time payments are insufficient. People deserve a break all the time, not just one time.

The budget also lacks parity. Most of the resources in it will be sent downstate to address needs there, while upstate communities will have to try to do more with less. Additionally, school districts were told to use the governor's projected budget numbers to formulate their own budgets. However, many of these districts saw significant changes and reductions to their final aid figures. This is unprecedented and will create challenges for these districts just weeks before they put their own budgets up for vote.

As a result of this budget, we will see more and more New Yorkers flee the state for better opportunities elsewhere because they can't afford to live or do business here.

I agree that changes to the discovery process and strengthening involuntary commitment laws are important. However, the tweaks that were made to discovery were so watered down that they will not make a difference and other so-called criminal justice 'fixes' are toothless. The governor's mask ban was the governor saying she did something but really doing nothing.

It would have been much more beneficial to consider these and other policy items outside of the budget - not jammed into thousand-page budget bills that legislators were forced to vote on shortly after reading them for the first time. Deliberating and debating these issues in an open and transparent manner out of the budget, with input from all stakeholders, provides for more opportunities for the Legislature to make effective and needed changes that will benefit New Yorkers.

New York is in desperate need of a change in direction. The current one is not working. The tax-and-spend approach of the majorities has left the state in a perilous financial position and projected to face significant structural budget deficits in the coming years, with a poor business climate and less economic opportunities and with hundreds of thousands of less residents.

As I have always done, I will continue to propose, support and advocate for common sense solutions, policies and initiatives that will enhance and strengthen our economy and communities and make the state safer and more affordable.”