



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

Senator Webb and the New York State Senate Majority Passes SFY 2025-26 Budget Prioritizing Affordability and Shielding New Yorkers from Federal Threats

LEA WEBB May 12, 2025

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

Delivers relief for working families, puts money back in New Yorkers' pockets, and strengthens the services communities rely on.

(Binghamton, NY) – Amid significant uncertainty and looming federal cuts, Senator Webb and the New York State Senate Majority has passed the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26 budget designed to prioritize affordability and provide relief to New York's working families. This strategic financial plan safeguards economic security, prepares the state for potential financial challenges, and makes targeted investments in education, housing, healthcare, public safety, and environmental stewardship to ensure future stability and equity.

"This budget reflects our shared commitment to tackling the most pressing issues facing New Yorkers—making life more affordable for working families, strengthening our public services, and safeguarding the future of our communities," **said Senator Lea Webb**. "I'm proud of the thoughtful contributions made by my colleagues in the Senate, and grateful for the leadership of the Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins as we worked together to reach this agreement. While this process wasn't easy, the results speak to our dedication to delivering meaningful progress for working families. I look forward to building on this

momentum in the months ahead to ensure every New Yorker has the opportunity to thrive.”

This year’s enacted budget underscores Senator Webb and the Senate Majority’s unwavering commitment to affordability, long-term economic security, and community resilience, positioning New York State to effectively meet current and future challenges — *highlights include:*

Making Life More Affordable for Working Families

Providing direct financial relief and essential support to New Yorkers, including:

Directly provides money to New Yorkers in the form of Inflation Rebate Checks as detailed below:

Married filers: \$400 for incomes up to \$150,000, \$300 for incomes

\$150,000–\$300,000

Single filers: \$200 for incomes up to \$75,000, \$150 for incomes

\$75,000–\$150,000

Lowest middle-class tax rates effective from Tax Year 2026

Cuts taxes for self-employed workers earning up to \$150,000 in the MTA region by raising the Payroll Mobility Tax threshold from the current \$50,000 threshold

Supporting NY Families:

\$8 million for baby benefits for new families to provide postpartum care packages and \$1.5 million to distribute approximately 10 million diapers to families across New York State

Three-year expansion of the child tax credit, providing \$1,000 annually for children under age four and increasing the credit for children aged four and older from \$330 in the first year to \$500 in the following two years

\$50 million for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) and Nourish NY

\$90 million for the Underserved Communities and Civic Engagement Program, which supports community-based programming, crisis intervention initiatives, housing assistance, economic development, workforce training, educational initiatives, and healthcare services in underserved communities

Providing Relief for High Utility Costs:

\$50 million for EmPower Plus to help individuals carry out energy efficient upgrades to their homes so they can decrease their utility costs via the Sustainable Futures Fund

\$25 million in additional funding for HEAP, the Home Energy Affordability Program, which provides the lowest income New Yorkers with direct relief on their heating bills

\$2 million for the Green Affordable Pre-Electrification Program (GAP) Fund to help individuals get needed upgrades to their homes so they can qualify for energy affordability programs

\$2.5 million for the Public Utility Law Project, which advocates for lower energy rates before the Public Service Commission and provides support to New Yorkers with utility-related legal and billing issues

High-Quality Education

Ensuring access to quality education from early childhood through college, including: Childcare & Afterschool:

An additional \$400 million, for a total of \$2.2 billion, for Child Care Block Grant funding to provide affordable child care across New York State to thousands of families

Establishes a Child Care Substitute Pool

\$100 million in capital funding for child care centers to allow for expansions and new centers to open

\$10 million in federal funds for family child care renovations

\$21.6 million for youth development programs

\$12.5 million for "Get Offline, Get Outside 2.0"

\$76.5 million for NYPLAYS and \$100 million for NYBRICKS

K–12 Education:

Continues our commitment to record funding for our schools with an additional \$120 million increase to Foundation Aid over the Executive's proposal for a total of \$26.4 billion

Provides a \$1.7 billion increase in school aid over last year, including a \$1.4 billion year-to-year increase in Foundation Aid

\$59.3 million to expand non-BOCES CTE funding to 9th grade and increases the per-pupil minimum and increases salary reimbursement rates for BOCES teachers so that school districts get the money they need to provide career-ready education to students

\$340 million for full universal school meals

“Distraction-free learning” cell phone policy in schools

Higher Education:

Capital funding for SUNY: an additional \$160 million for a total of \$2.3 billion

Capital funding for CUNY: an additional \$83 million for a total of \$580.4 million

Creates the New York Opportunity Promise Scholarship for New Yorkers aged 25–55 pursuing critical workforce associate degrees

Expands operational funding for community colleges with an increase of \$6 million to SUNY community colleges for a total of \$14 million, and \$4 million to CUNY for a total of \$9.3 million

Restores Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) funding

Arts & Libraries:

Fully restores \$20 million in operating grants and \$40 million in capital grants for arts organizations to the New York State Council on the Arts

\$150,000 for a new pilot program supporting social workers in libraries Adds \$1.7 million for library operating aid for a total of \$106.3 million Adds \$10 million for library capital grants for a total of \$44 million

Housing Initiatives

Continuing investments in stable, affordable housing for tenants and homeowners, including:

\$50 million annually for the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) pilot, which will provide four years of vouchers distribution to individuals and families who are homeless or

at risk of homelessness

\$40 million for the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP)

\$20 million for eviction legal counseling

Expands the use and transferability of State Historic Property Tax Credits Extends and doubles state Low-Income Housing Credits

Over \$1 billion towards City of Yes initiatives in NYC, including:

\$50 million for Revolving Loan Fund in NYC

\$500 million for new affordable housing construction

\$225 million for NYCHA

\$110 million total for Mitchell-Lama preservation in NYC

\$50 million total for New York Housing for the Future Homeownership and Rental Programs

\$50 million for supportive housing in NYC

\$50 million for lead abatement in NYC

\$20 million for stabilization and preservation of existing affordable or supportive multifamily rental properties in NYC

Funding for Housing outside NYC, including:

\$50 million outside NYC for a Housing Revolving Loan Fund

\$75 million for public housing outside NYC

\$30 million for Mitchell-Lama preservation outside NYC

\$40 million for the Vacant Rental Improvement Program to bring apartments up to code for use as affordable rentals outside NYC

\$30 million for the Block by Block Program to help upstate cities develop one and two-family infill homes

\$40 million for land banks

\$10 million for Shelter Arrears Eviction Forestallment Program

\$10 million for Small Rental Development Initiative to build small rental buildings in upstate communities

Healthcare & Mental Health

Expanding access to care and strengthening mental health services statewide, including:

\$305 million for Hospital Operating Support

\$223 million for nursing homes and \$7.5 million for assisted living programs \$20 million for Federally Qualified Health Centers

\$500 million restored to distressed hospitals

\$70 million invested in the Opioid Settlement Fund

\$20.5 million additional funding for 200 inpatient mental health beds

An additional \$250 million, for a total of \$450 million, for critical infrastructure improvements to SUNY Upstate Hospital, the only level one trauma center serving over a dozen counties

Extends the Emergency Medical Service Fee Authorization for Fire Departments and Fire Districts for an additional five years, allowing essential services to better provide care throughout the state

Doubles funding currently available via the Mobile Sports Wagering Program to assist with problem gambling from \$6 million to \$12 million

Ensuring Access to Reproductive Health Care:

\$70 million for reproductive health initiatives, including:

\$25 million for the Reproductive Freedom and Equity Grant Program \$25 million for abortion medication care grants

\$15 million for reproductive healthcare facilities capital grants

\$4 million for abortion provider training

\$1 million for abortion access

Requires hospitals to provide emergency abortion care

Modernizes pregnancy loss reporting to protect patient privacy

Expands Medicaid coverage for infertility preservation services

Improving Behavioral Health Crisis Response, Launching Daniel's Law Pilot Program:

Establishes Daniel's Law pilot programs for \$6 million and creates the Behavioral Health Crisis Technical Assistance Center with \$2 million for implementation

Clarified involuntary commitment standards for the purposes of delivering care to those in need, while also strengthening guardrails to ensure safe and humane transportation, along with increased training for first responders. The Senate was instrumental in providing greater discharge planning requirements for when people are released from care facilities, a meaningful step in helping connect individuals with longer term services

Improves Assisted Outpatient Treatment standards (Kendra's Law) to ensure people get the care they need

Requires annual review of excessive force incidents during behavioral health responses to create better protocols for response and treatment

Public Safety & Justice

Protecting communities, strengthening victims' services, and investing in smart public safety solutions, including:

Establishes the Office of Gun Violence Prevention within Criminal Justice Services

Enhances protections for sexual assault and domestic violence victims, including making it easier for survivors to access public assistance and strengthening workplace policies related to gender-based violence

An additional \$1.5 million specifically for gun violence initiatives for a total of \$325 million in gun violence prevention funding

Increases funding for youth and community safety programs

Updates the state's discovery laws to ensure cases aren't thrown out on technicalities and perpetrators are brought to justice by directing judges to assess the prosecutor's overall efforts and the actual impact of any missing evidence, reducing case dismissals over minor oversights

An additional \$15 million for discovery reform for a total of \$135 million

Consumer Protection

Strengthening safeguards against deceptive practices and protecting New Yorkers' money, including:

Regulates "Buy-Now, Pay-Later" (BNPL) loans by establishing first-in-the-nation consumer protections and limiting fees and interest

Expands standardized retail return policies to include online retailers

Enhances transparency for subscriptions with mandatory multiple cancellation options
Requires disclosure for dynamic pricing algorithms

Providing Critical Investments to New York's Businesses

Expanding state contracting opportunities and providing essential relief to New York's job creators, including:

Pays off the \$8 billion unemployment insurance debt, helping to provide relief from high fees and taxes for businesses across New York State, which had to lay off employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Extends the state's MWBE program by three years and commissions a new policy study to consider other ways to improve program participation and mentoring

Expands the discretionary bidding threshold for all state agencies from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million, and expands the discretionary bidding threshold for state authorities from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million to increase MWBE and service-disabled veteran participation in state contracts

Supporting Workers

Delivering targeted relief and opportunity for New York's workforce, including:

Fully pays off unemployment insurance (UI) debt; increases UI benefits from current \$504 per week to \$869 per week, and then to 50% of state average weekly wage starting October 2026

2.6% targeted inflationary increase for human services workers at O agencies Enhances enforcement against wage theft

Increases penalties for child labor violations

Decreases the waiting period for striking workers to collect unemployment insurance
Extends the civil service exam fee waiver to December 31, 2027

Expands apprenticeship programs in high-demand sectors

Provides long overdue pension reform for members of law enforcement, including: 20-year retirement for Tier 3 NYPD officers

20/25-year retirement for New York State Forest Rangers, New York State Park Police, State University of New York (SUNY) Police, and Environmental Conservation Officers

An increased final average salary for retiring detectives, lieutenants, and sergeants of the NYPD

Codifies the Healthy Terminals Act effective January 1, 2026, including part-time workers

Environmental Stewardship

Advancing environmental protections and sustainability, including:

\$1 billion in climate resiliency and green energy funding through the Sustainable Futures Fund, including:

\$450 million for building greenhouse gas emissions, including:

\$200 million for thermal energy projects at SUNY and CUNY

\$50 million for Clean Green Schools, and for the purchase and installation of energy efficient equipment at single family residences, multi-unit

residential apartment buildings, and residential premises owned as a

residential cooperative apartment or condominium unit

\$40 million for municipal thermal energy projects

\$250 million for zero-emission transportation, including:

\$100 million for zero-emission transportation, including school buses and supporting infrastructure

\$50 million for EV fast charging stations and supporting infrastructure for municipal, commercial, medium duty, heavy duty, and fleet vehicles

\$50 million for NYSERDA Charge Ready NY Program

\$200 million for renewable energy projects

\$100 million in additional unallocated funding

\$1.7 billion for the 50-year Fire Island to Montauk Point Project (FIMP) \$500 million for clean water grants

\$425 million for the largest Environmental Protection Fund in state history Increases the Geothermal Tax Credit from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and adds refundability as an option for certain taxpayers

Bans PFAS in personal protective equipment for firefighters starting in 2028 and ensures disposal of this PFAS is environmentally sound

Transportation & Infrastructure

Modernizing transit, strengthening road safety, and building infrastructure for the future, including:

Increases funding for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) by \$50 million over the Executive's proposal for a total of \$100 million over the next two years

\$5 million increase over the Executive's proposal for non-MTA STOA for a total of \$907.8 million

Extends the Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement Program by five years and expands it to include more work zones on state roads and the Thruway; expands the pilot program to include Bridge Authority and Triborough Bridge and Tunnel crossings

Fully funds the MTA's 2025–29 Capital Program, including \$3 billion in direct state commitment and reducing the MTA's borrowing costs

Agriculture & Food

Securing the future of New York's farms, farmworkers, and food systems, including:

Increases funding for farmworker housing and overtime credits

Increases funding for farmland protection by \$4 million for a total of \$25 million in the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)

Includes a carve out of \$1 million for capacity grants for local agricultural farmland protection planning

Increases farmworker housing loan cap from \$200,000 to \$400,000 per project Restores millions to bedrock farm programs

Veterans and Military Families

Improving veteran and family support services, including:

Expands eligibility and outreach requirements for Gold Star Annuity

Enhances veterans' services

\$8 million in Dwyer funding

\$350,000 for Veterans Mental Health Training Initiative (VMHTI)

###