



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

2005-06 Budget Highlights

William J. Larkin Jr.

April 4, 2005

"For the first time in 21 years, we have an on-time budget," said Senator Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson). "I am extremely pleased that we can provide a sense of relief to the state's taxpayers and I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in accomplishing this goal. We worked in the true spirit of compromise and hopefully restored the public's faith in the system. Our next goal will be to implement the budget reforms that the Senate Majority has been pushing for so that we can guarantee on-time budgets like this in the future."

Highlights of the 2005-06 state budget include an additional \$324,753,290 in state aid to area schools in the 39th Senate District. This increase represents an average increase of 8% to our school districts. The state average is 5.5%. Overall, total school aid is \$16.2 billion, the highest level in state history.

In the area of Higher Education, the budget restores more than \$100 million dollars to maintain the Tuition Assistance Program and increases community college base aid by \$115 per full-time student. It also includes several hundred million dollars for capital projects at SUNY and at independent colleges and universities.

In Health Care, the budget restores \$762.1 million for health care programs and services, as well as restoring \$235.6 million for hospitals. The budget caps local Medicaid costs that are placing an increasing burden on local property taxpayers and accelerates the State takeover of local Family Health Plus costs. Together these measures will save local taxpayers more than \$3 billion when fully implemented.

Under Transportation, the budget includes a \$35.8 billion multi-year transportation capital plan for highway, bridge and MTA mass transit projects; a \$350 million investment in multi-modal transportation for facilities that provide more than one mode of transportation; and \$100 million for local CHIPS assistance.

Concerning Tax Cuts and Economic Development, the budget includes \$155 million in business and personal income tax reductions over the next four years to create jobs and strengthen the economy and will expand the Empire Zone program to include 12 new zones.