



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

## **Highlights from the Fourth Consecutive On-Time Budget**

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This week marked the passage of the state's fourth consecutive on-time budget. This has not been accomplished with the same Governor and legislative leaders in

more than 40 years. This budget holds spending growth below 2% and addresses your priorities—among them increased school aid, property tax relief, health care, and growing the economy.

Highlights of the budget include:

- \$1.1 billion increase (5.3%) in education funding, the largest increase in more than five years, with 70 percent of that increase targeted toward high-need schools.
- \$602 million in Gap Elimination Aid; championed by the Senate, this allocation is seven times the Assembly proposal and 80% higher than the Executive Budget proposal.
- Common Core reforms.
- \$1.5 billion in property tax relief.
- Expansion of the successful Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) Program.
- Protection for consumers from surprise medical bills from out-of-network physicians.
- Lowered cost of doing businesses for manufacturers through tax credits and reduced tax rates.
- \$40 million for projects to repair problems, such as potholes, caused by the severe winter weather.
- New provisions to combat corruption in government.

More information about the 2014-15 Enacted Budget may be found on the [NYS Budget website](#).

### **Vera House White Ribbon Campaign**

My colleague Sen. DeFrancisco and I wear white ribbons in support of Vera House's campaign to raise awareness about domestic and sexual abuse. The campaign runs through April 6. Find out how you can participate at [www.verahouse.org](http://www.verahouse.org).

### **Spring Clean-Up Opportunities**

OCRRA's Compost Sites Open April 1: The Amboy and Jamesville Compost Sites are now open for the season. A \$15 site pass allows unlimited drop off of yard waste and

pick up of up to 6 cu. yds. of high-quality mulch or compost from either site. Both sites are open Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; closed Sundays. Locations are 6296 Airport Road, Camillus (Amboy Compost Site) and 4370 Route 91, Jamesville.

**Syracuse Grows:** The city's many community gardens are in need of volunteers during the spring Resource Drive on April 19. During the Resource Drive, volunteers shovel and haul compost and clean and prepare gardens for the upcoming growing season. Since all Syracuse Grows' 15 + member gardens are involved in this event, many volunteers are needed. Email [syracusegrows@gmail.com](mailto:syracusegrows@gmail.com) for more information.

**I Love My Park Day:** [Online registration](#) is now open for I Love My Park Day. On Saturday, May 3, join volunteers at state parks and historic sites across the state to help celebrate and spruce up park lands and beaches, plant trees and gardens, restore trails and wildlife habitat, and more.

### **New State Certificate Honors New York Cold War Military for Their Service**

The New York State Cold War Certificate honors New Yorkers who served in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, along with their reserve components, as well as the Army and Air National Guard during the 46-year standoff between the United States and NATO allies and the Soviet Union and its Communist allies.

The certificate is available to any New York resident who served in the military and was honorably discharged between the end of World War II on Sept. 2, 1945 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union on Dec. 26, 1991. Information on how to apply for the New York State Cold War Certificate can be found on the [New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs awards website](#) or by calling 518-591-5296.