



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Statement from State Senator Gustavo Rivera on the Senate Budget Resolution

GUSTAVO RIVERA March 15, 2016

| ISSUE: **SENATE BUDGET RESOLUTION**

"Once again, the recently passed Senate's budget resolution has shortchanged New York City. The Senate Majority continues to demonstrate an unwillingness to properly address the issues that affect everyday New Yorkers.

How does this budget resolution fail New Yorkers? Let me count the ways:

I am incredibly troubled that this resolution takes further steps to shift costs from the state to the city for both Medicaid and for the City University of New York. The impact of these unconscionable cuts would prove to be catastrophic to the millions of New Yorkers that heavily rely on these basic services.

While this resolution proposes extending an education investment tax credit that does not necessarily financially benefit our city's public schools or those students that are most in need, it fails to include the DREAM Act and the necessary funding for the State to finally fulfill its obligation under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity settlement.

After a long history of struggling with one of the worst AIDS epidemics in the country, I also find it disturbing that this budget resolution does not provide the full funding needed to

meet the goals set by the Ending of AIDS Epidemic blueprint. This funding is essential to prevent thousands of new HIV infections and improving HIV health outcomes throughout our State.

Additionally, I'm disappointed that critical measures such Campaign Finance Reform and Raise The Age were not even included in this resolution. It is imperative that we make these issues a priority if we are to restore New Yorker's trust in both our government and in our criminal justice system.

It is also a disservice to both our economy and New Yorkers that this resolution does not include a \$15 minimum wage. By not doing so, we are turning our back to the millions of New Yorkers who continue to struggle with a current minimum wage that does not come close to covering the cost of living of an individual and much less of a family. A study is not enough, we need a raise in our minimum wage now.

As one of the state's most vibrant economic engines, it is time that New York City is treated as fairly as the rest of the State. I am committed to continuing to work with my colleagues in the Democratic Conference to strongly advocate for the inclusion of progressive principals in our State's budget that reflect the priorities and needs of all our residents, in particular the working-class and our most vulnerable, especially as it relates to the proposed cuts to the City University of New York's budget.

On this last point, let me be clear. The proposed \$485 million budget cut to the City University of New York represents a pernicious and indefensible attack not only on New York City, but on the almost 500,000 working class New Yorkers that consider CUNY their only opportunity to pursue a higher education degree. We should not jeopardize our students' academic future by playing dangerous games with their hopes and dreams. I will be relentless in protecting this critical funding for our students and their future."

To listen to Senator Rivera's explanation of his "nay" vote on the floor of the Senate, please click this [link](#).