



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

STATEMENT FROM SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE ON 2016-17 STATE BUDGET

PATTY RITCHIE April 1, 2016



Just a few short months ago, we set out to craft a spending plan that strengthens the middle class, grows our economy and improves educational opportunities for students. Today, I'm proud to say we succeeded in achieving those goals, approving a new state budget that will help to build a better future for all New Yorkers.

It provides record funding to ensure quality education for our children, finally puts a stop to the budget-cheating GEA gimmick and halts SUNY tuition increases to keep a college

education within reach of more middle class families.

It sets in motion a new round of tax cuts for the hardworking middle class, which will bring the lowest state tax rates in 70 years. It invests in our most important industry, agriculture, by restoring all of the devastating budget cuts for farmers that were included in the Governor's plan, to help strengthen family farming and the rural communities that agriculture supports.

It achieved parity in infrastructure funding, so Upstate communities won't be cheated of funds we need to ensure safe, reliable roads and bridges that sustain a healthy economy and help our region grow.

Lastly, we pushed back on the Governor's one-size-fits-all minimum wage proposal, replacing it with a measured plan that takes into account the concerns of job creators and small businesses, provides relief for farmers and includes a safety valve to protect jobs and the economy, all while giving a needed boost to struggling workers and their families.

This spending plan is just the start of the important work that needs to be done in Albany to improve the quality of life for people here in Central and Northern New York, as well as across the state. As the 2016 Legislative session continues, I'm looking forward to building on this plan to help create more opportunities for all New Yorkers.