



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

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

GUSTAVO RIVERA March 16, 2017

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The Senate One House Budget Resolution that was passed yesterday continues to demonstrate the Senate Republicans' unwillingness to address important issues affecting working class New Yorkers. Furthermore and in an unprecedented move, Senate Republicans allowed the Independent Democratic Conference to introduce a Republican-light budget resolution, while blocking the Senate Democratic Conference's efforts to introduce one that would have reflected the progressive values and needs of the millions of New Yorkers we proudly represent.

There are many areas in which this resolution falls short for New Yorkers, but the most troubling is its failure to raise the age of criminal responsibility. It is morally wrong and irresponsible to continue to allow New York to be one of only two states nationwide that prosecute children 16 years and older, such as Kalief Browder, as adults.

However, this is not the only area in which the Republican Budget Resolution fails our youth. Under the newly proposed Foundation Aid formula, our City's public schools will continue to be shortchanged hindering our students ability to reach their full academic potential. Furthermore, the budget cuts to Opportunity Programs, such as SEEK, HEOP and

EOP, C-STEP, STEP, ASAP, and EOC are certainly alarming as these programs are sometimes the only hope many low-income New Yorkers have of obtaining a higher education.

The \$65 million cut in funding to the MTA would prove devastating for New York City. As a City that heavily relies on its public transportation system, our State needs to fulfill its commitment to New Yorkers and provide the MTA with the critical funding it needs in order to improve its system, especially in working class neighborhoods.

In terms of housing, the Senate Republicans' accepted and enhanced benefits to the Affordable New York Housing Program (421-A) which fails to offer relief to millions of rent-burdened New Yorkers already struggling to find affordable housing in an effort to keep a roof over their heads.

Additionally, I am deeply disappointed that critical good government measures, such as closing the LLC loophole and limiting outside income, were entirely omitted from this resolution. These measures are critical if we are to restore New Yorker's trust in our government and dispel the notion that New Yorkers' interests come second to the ones of those who finance campaigns.

I am committed to continue working alongside my colleagues in the Democratic Conference to advocate for the inclusion of progressive measures in our State's budget and fight for our State's most vulnerable communities.

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