



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## IDC delivers Raise the Age & historic immigrant legal aid fund in this year's budget

JEFFREY D. KLEIN April 9, 2017

| ISSUE: **IMMIGRANT RIGHTS, RAISE THE AGE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM, COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY, EDUCATION**

*State Budget Changes New York for the Better with higher wages, increased education funding & college affordability plans*

**Albany, NY** — Members of the **Independent Democratic Conference** delivered for all New Yorkers in this year's state budget — with a measure to Raise the Age of criminal responsibility to end the cycle of mass incarceration of 16- and 17-year-olds and meeting the urgent need of New York's immigrant communities with a historic \$10 million commitment to legal services.

The eight-member conference, who rolled out their *Changing New York* agenda in January, highlighted other key achievements they fought for including raised wages for direct care workers, a record investment in education funding and college affordability measures.

Major budget victories include:

- **Raise the Age:** Most 16- and 17-year-olds will wind up in Family Court where they will receive the services they need to set their lives on the right track. This major reform includes moving teens out of Rikers Island by 2018.

- **Immigrant Legal Services:** A record \$10 million legal aid fund will be established to help immigrants with legal services, green card application processing, job training and more.
- **A Record \$1.1 Billion in Education Aid:** The state increases Foundation Aid by \$700 million this year, bringing it up to \$1.1 billion, and that's money that our public schools deserve. The IDC fought for \$50 million for community schools, and those funds can be used for dual language programs, more mental health services and after school programs. The funds will also create new community schools.
- **A Raise for Direct Care workers:** The state dedicates \$55 million for the state's nonprofits to give our direct care workers a raise. Direct care workers take care of New York's most vulnerable citizens and deserve higher wages.
- **Preservation of the Millionaire's Tax:** The state's highest earners will continue to pay their fair share in taxes with a raised tax bracket to help fund New York's most vital programs that help all residents.
- **College Affordability:** The state provides first year funding of \$86 million, \$125 million when fully phased, for the implementation of the Excelsior Scholarship for SUNY and CUNY students. Students receive \$5,500 including TAP, with a fully phased in income eligibility of \$125,000. The state also provides enhanced tuition awards for independent colleges and universities, with students receiving up to \$6,000 including TAP.
- **NYCHA funding:** \$200 million will go towards making critical repairs at NYCHA buildings, which provide critical affordable housing for New York City residents.
- **Middle Income Housing:** \$150 million will help preserve Mitchell-Lama buildings and other middle income buildings which provide affordable housing to individuals like teachers, bus drivers and firemen.
- **Improving Water Infrastructure:** The state appropriates \$2.5 billion for water infrastructure and clean water initiatives to ensure that what happened Hoosick Falls does not happen

again.

- **Enhances Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit:** lowers the out-of-pocket expenses of childcare for even more hardworking families.
- **Manufacturer's Apprenticeship Program Expansion:** After a successful launch in Syracuse, this IDC created program will branch out with a \$750,000 award to help cut red tape on training programs for small- and medium-sized manufacturing companies.
- Pre-K consolidation
- **Protecting Consumers Utilizing Reverse Mortgages:** Often utilized by seniors, protections include settlement conferences in cases where the default was triggered by the death of the last surviving borrower and allowing the last surviving borrower's spouse or successor who has a claim to ownership to engage in settlement conference.
- **Revitalizing Our Communities:** \$1 million for the establishment of community land trusts, nonprofits that buy land to convert to affordable housing, to increase homeownership and affordable rentals in reach for those frozen out of the market. The state also provides \$500,000 towards lead abatement efforts for land banks to rehabilitate foreclosed and abandoned properties.
- **\$10 million for Foreclosure Prevention Programs:** Funding for these crucial services that keep people in their homes were about to run dry. With \$10 million, these important services can continue.

"When the IDC announced our *Changing New York* agenda in January, we committed to making the lives of all New Yorkers better. With the passage of this budget we honor that commitment. We have Raised the Age to move the vast majority of 16- and 17-year-olds to Family Court and keep them out of adult prisons. We stand behind our immigrant communities with crucial funding for legal services so that they are protected from

deportation and receive assistance in applying for citizenship. And we have created a college affordability program to help all of our young people continue their education. I am proud to have worked with Senator Flanagan, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Governor Cuomo to continue to move our state forward,” **IDC Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester)**.

“This year’s budget provides an unprecedented \$2.5 billion investment in our state’s infrastructure to protect our drinking water and ensure our families can live healthy lives. It will also help communities upstate increase affordable housing by providing funding for community land trusts and land banks to revitalize our communities. Upstate New Yorkers will also now have ridesharing at their fingertips, an economic boost that I have long fought for,” **IDC Deputy Leader David Valesky (D-Syracuse)**.

“New York’s Raise the Age legislation goes substantially further than many other states in how we deal with 16- and 17-year-olds. Teenagers deserve a second chance at life and by Raising the Age, sending non-violent offenders to Family Court, we give our kids the chance to succeed. We’re also investing a record \$1.2 billion in Foundation Aid, and raised income eligibility for increased TAP awards. This is a budget that invests in our future,” **Senator Diane Savino (D-SI/Brooklyn)**.

“Over the years, New York has continued to outrank all other states in per pupil funding for public education. This year we built upon those numbers by investing a record \$1.2 billion, a \$700 million increase, in Foundation Aid which is critical to our students in public schools. We keep college more affordable with higher TAP awards and increased eligibility and help families deal with child care expenses through an enhanced child care credit,” **Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester)**.

“At the beginning of session this year I made Raise the Age a top priority, having held the first public hearing dedicated solely to the issue. As the Chairman of the Committee on Children & Families, I vowed that this would be the year we accomplished it. The 2017-2018

budget also provides needed funding to ensure we invest in affordable housing so our hard-working families do not succumb to New York's unbearable and rising cost of living, helping them avoid our dangerous and unsanitary homeless shelter system," **Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens)**.

"During my first year in the Senate I am proud of what we have accomplished for New Yorkers with the passage of this year's budget. This budget sends a clear message that our immigrant communities matter and they don't have to live in fear thanks to our important initiative to protect immigrant communities with the largest funding for immigrant defense in the state's history," **Senator Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan)**.

"The jails and prisons that brutalize our children with cruelty and solitary confinement makes you question whether we have a criminal justice system at all. This Raise the Age proposal creates a fairer, more compassionate system that offers non-violent offenders a second chance with needed rehabilitation to get their life back on track, pursue an education and contribute to their communities. Raising the Age will help to ensure teens like Kalief Browder do not senselessly lose their lives for minor crimes. New Yorkers deserve better and this budget delivers just that," **Senator Jesse Hamilton (D-Brooklyn)**.

"We are living in difficult times, and a sign of that is the urgent need we have to protect our immigrant communities more than ever. Sadly, in the age of Trump, immigrants in my district and throughout the State go about their daily lives with fear at every step. The IDC is preserving the American Dream for every person, who like my parents, comes here to seek that dream. This budget includes Raise the Age, a record \$1.2 billion Foundation Aid investment and a raise for our workers. This budget delivers for all hard-working New Yorkers and their families," **Senator Jose Peralta (D-Queens)**.