



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

Senator Parker and the Senate Majority Advance New York Values & Protect Taxpayers

[Kevin S. Parker](#)

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(Brooklyn, NY) Today, State Senator Kevin Parker and the Senate Majority Conference passed an on-time spending plan for New York State that will provide tax relief for New York's overburdened families by implementing a permanent property tax cap, reforming draconian criminal justice practices, and making New York's educational system more equitable with a \$1 billion increase in school-aid.

A fiscally responsible budget that remains within the 2% statewide spending cap, the 2019-2020 New York State Budget passed by the Senate Democratic Majority will improve the quality of life for New Yorkers by enshrining the Affordable Care Act into state law so that every New Yorker is afforded quality health care; investing in environmental protection efforts like banning the use of single-use plastic bags; and historic, long-awaited criminal justice reforms such as ending cash bail and revamping our state's draconian Speedy Trial and Discovery laws.

Senator Parker stated, "The state budget we passed today is a direct reflection of our bedrock democratic values of fairness and equality. The increase in public school funding, coupled with the permanent property tax cap and transformative criminal justice reforms, will level the playing field and open up more doors to more opportunities for all New Yorkers." The Senator concluded, "I applaud the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and my colleagues in the Senate Democratic Conference for delivering an inclusive, on-time budget that takes into account every New Yorker in every corner of our great state."

During a tough fiscal year, the Senate Majority was able to achieve these accomplishments despite lower anticipated state revenues due to efforts by the Trump Administration to attack New York State finances. The enacted budget will:

- Support New York students by increasing school aid by over \$1 billion, a 3.8 percent growth bringing the total amount of school aid to \$27.9 billion.
- Provide a 3.5%, or \$618 million, increase for Foundation Aid.
- Provide tax relief for overburdened New York families by implementing a permanent property tax cap.
- Provide \$656 million in AIM funds to struggling municipalities.
- Historic criminal justice reform that will eliminate cash bail.

Improving Educational Opportunities

The Senate Majority believes that it is our responsibility to ensure that all New York students have access to a high quality education no matter their zip code. The enacted budget provides the largest amount of school aid in state history by providing an over \$1 billion increase to public education investment across New York State. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Increasing School Aid by over \$1 billion, or 3.8%, over the 2018-2019 school year.
- Increasing Foundation Aid by \$618 million, or 3.5%, over the 2018-2019 school year.
- This investment brings the total state education funding to \$27.9 billion, and allocates over 70% of funds to high need school districts.
- Providing \$342 million to fully fund expense -based aid and allows flexibility for Community Schools Foundation Aid Set-Aside funding.
- Providing \$849 million for expanded pre-kindergarten grants, \$15 million increase to provide programs for three- and four-year olds.
- Extends mayoral accountability of New York City schools for three years, and includes reforms to enhance transparency and parental/community input in New York City school governance.
- Authorizes “piggyback contracts” for transportation in education by cutting the red tape that prevented school districts from working together to save money.

- Providing \$34.4 million for school lunch programs and a \$9 million increase to expand early college high schools.

Providing Real Tax Relief And Support To Local Communities

- New York State residents and businesses struggle with high taxes, and local government rely on state support to provide essential services. The Senate Majority is committed to providing tax relief and support to local communities and families. The enacted State Budget includes:
- Implementing a permanent property tax cap, which was already passed by the Senate Democratic Majority this Legislative Session, is projected to save taxpayers \$189.9 billion over the next 10 years.
- Allocating \$715 million of Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding to certain Towns and Villages within the AIM program and adding additional state funds to several in-need local governments.

Empowering New Yorkers To Stay In Their Homes

The Senate Majority is committed to access to affordable housing for New Yorkers and protecting them from housing discrimination. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Implementing the Lawful Source of Income Non-Discrimination Act of 2019 to fight housing discrimination.
- New Yorkers who receive some form of lawful non-wage income or subsidies will now be protected against discrimination in housing including: domestic violence survivors, veterans, elderly, and disabled individuals.
- Delivering relief for Nassau County homeowners by approving a five year phase-in of impacts related to the recently completed county-wide reassessment.
- Increasing funding for the Tenant Protection Unit to \$5.5 million, a 22% increase over the current year.
- Investing \$20 million in foreclosure prevention services to help New Yorkers stay in their homes.

Restoring Trust In State Government And Reforming The Electoral System

In January 2019, The Senate Majority passes historic pro-voter bills and electoral system reforms. The Senate Majority continued to work to further those efforts through the State Budget in order to restore the voters' trust in state government. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Allocating \$10 million in funding for early voting and \$14.5 million in funding for e-poll books.
- A public financing commission with binding power to implement public campaign financing for legislative and statewide offices.
- Findings are due December 1, 2019 and will be binding unless modified by law within 20 days.
- Expanding upstate voting hours to begin at 6:00 AM and end at 9:00 PM, to ensure all New Yorkers have uniform voting hours.
- Protecting grassroots and volunteer-run organizations from being forced to register as lobbyists.
- Requiring three hours of paid time off so New Yorkers will be better able to vote on Election Day.

Supporting New York Businesses

The Senate Majority supports investment to assist New York businesses to grow, create jobs and be successful throughout the state. It is especially committed to encouraging the continued growth of Minority and Women Owned businesses. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Allocating \$365,000 for the Minority and Women Owned Business Development and Lending Program.
- Investing \$4 million for the Workforce Development Institute.
- Major investments to steer state and local resources to community banks and credit unions, which will help provide additional lending access to underserved communities.

Improving Health Care For New Yorkers

Quality health care is a basic right that all New Yorkers deserve access to. The Senate Majority understands this fact and worked to ensure that the State Budget provides essential funding for New Yorker's health care needs and essential medical care providers. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Implementing the federal Affordable Care Act and the New York Health Care Exchange into State law
- Investing \$100 million in OASAS to better confront the opioid abuse crisis.
- Requiring health insurance companies to increase the length of time available for New Yorkers seeking in-patient treatment for substance abuse disorders.
- Providing over \$3.8 million for School Based Health Clinics.
- Investing significant state funds for research and programs to combat diseases including Sickle Cell, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Lupus

Protecting New York's Environment And Natural Resources

The Senate Majority supports efforts to protect New York State's environment and natural resources. With a federal government run by climate change deniers, the Senate Majority will work to have New York State serve as a national and international leader in the fight against climate change. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Banning single-use plastic bags and empowering counties and cities to opt into a 5-cent fee on paper bags, with 40 percent of the generated revenue going to local efforts to provide reusable bags for low and fixed-income consumers, and 60 percent of the generated revenue going to the State's Environmental Protection Fund.
- Allocating an additional \$500 million, for a total of \$3 billion, for clean water infrastructure projects such as improvements to solid waste management facilities, inter-municipal infrastructure projects, projects to address emerging contaminants, water quality improvement projects, concentrated animal feeding operations, septic system replacement, and projects to address issues

on Long Island.

- Providing an historic level of funding for the Environmental Protection Fund of \$300 million.

Reforming New York's Justice System:

The Senate Majority is committed to a fairer state justice system and the enacted budget includes long-called for reforms to make New York State fairer and more just. The enacted budget includes:

- **Reforming Bail and Pretrial Detention:** The enacted budget will eliminate cash bail for misdemeanors and non-violent felonies and ensure that no New Yorker is incarcerated because of their inability to pay. Additionally, law enforcement officials will be required to issue a desk appearance ticket to most people charged with misdemeanors and Class E felonies.
- **Ensuring the Right to a Speedy Trial:** The enacted budget will ensure that defendants do not sit in jail waiting for a trial while dates keep getting postponed by requiring that misdemeanors are resolved within 90 days and felonies within 180 days. The enacted budget includes legislation that requires courts to take a proactive role in advising litigants on how time will be charged and inquire into the government's readiness to proceed to trial and require the government to file all suitable paperwork before statement of readiness is accepted.
- **Transforming the Discovery Process:** The enacted budget includes reforms that will overall New York's discovery process to require that both prosecutors and defendants share all information in their possession well in advance of trial. This legislation will also ensure that both victims and witnesses are protected from intimidation and other forms of coercion by providing prosecutors the ability to petition a court for a protective order.

Boosting New York State Agriculture

The Senate Majority is committed to investing in New York State's agriculture industry, which is an important economic driver in regions across New York State. The enacted State Budget includes:

- Investing over \$9.2 million for the Agribusiness Child Development Program.
- Major investments for agriculture programs including \$750,000 for Farm-to-School programs, \$842,000 for the Future Farmers of America, \$872,000 for the FarmNet program which provides assistance to farming families, and \$750,000 for the Apple Growers Association.
- Allocating over \$1 million for the NY Wine & Grape Foundation.

About Senator Kevin Parker:

Senator Kevin Parker represents Brooklyn's ethnically diverse 21st Senate District comprised of sections of Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope. A lifelong Brooklyn resident, Senator Parker has the honor of serving his community as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Telecommunications, and on the Senate Standing Committees on Finance; Rules; Alcoholism & Substance Abuse; Insurance; and Banks.

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