



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

GRIFFO RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR'S STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO January 9, 2020

| ISSUE: **STATE OF THE STATE, AFFORDABILITY, CUTTING TAXES, MEDICAID**

New York State Senate Deputy Minority Leader Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, released the following statement in response to Gov. Cuomo's State of the State address in Albany:

"There were a number of proposals outlined by Gov. Cuomo that are certainly worth further consideration and examination. While I am pleased with several of the initiatives and projects proposed by the Governor, I also am cognizant of the fact that these proposals come with a hefty price tag and that New York State is facing a growing budget deficit. With this in mind, we will thoroughly review all of these proposals, offer our own counterproposals and further discuss their fiscal implications for New York State.

I am concerned that the Governor's plan unveiled today did not include a potential solution to closing the approximately \$6.2 billion budget gap that has resulted from rising Medicaid costs and overspending by Democrats. Just as working families across New York restrict spending and make wise choices with their hard-earned paychecks, New York State needs to rein in and control its spending. Unfortunately, some downstate Democrats have talked about raising taxes to address this year's budget gap. This is an unacceptable solution and one that I do not support. Instead of increasing taxes and making our state less affordable, we should reexamine, reevaluate and reform the method in which the state pays for

Medicaid.

I also was disappointed that no specific proposal was laid out to address recovery and remediation efforts for regions of the state that continue to be hit hard by flooding and severe weather. While we will continue to work with our federal partners to find a solution to this problem, we must seek out new ways of dealing with this issue at the state level. This can include establishing a fund to help those affected by a natural disaster and incorporating a home buyback program, such as I have proposed.

As we head into a new Legislative Session, I remain troubled by the direction in which our state is heading. According to estimates from the Census Bureau, New York State has lost more people than any other state for the second year in a row. We continue to see individuals, families and businesses flee our state at an alarming rate and there are no signs that this hemorrhaging of our population will end anytime soon. These people and companies are not leaving because of the weather, as some have suggested. They are leaving because of high taxes, burdensome regulations, problematic bail reform and other changes and, currently, a New York City-centric philosophy stemming from the downstate Democrats who control all levels of state government.

Our priority should be reducing taxes and energy costs, easing mandates on local governments, implementing regulatory reform, creating jobs, promoting economic opportunity and making our state more affordable for residents and businesses. These are my priorities in Albany, and I will continue to advocate for them and the residents of Upstate New York during this year's Session."

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