



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Issues Statement on 2020-21 State Budget

PATRICK GALLIVAN April 2, 2020

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The Senate has approved a package of bills that make up the state budget for Fiscal Year 2021. While the budget process is always hectic, the unprecedented challenges presented by the Coronavirus has made the circumstances even more daunting.

Now more than ever, citizens expect their representatives to work together. In the midst of a crisis, elected leaders should be more transparent, not less. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Over the past day or so, voluminous budget bills totaling billions of dollars were presented to members of the Senate just minutes before we were asked to vote on them. I

traveled to Albany to participate in this process, but there was little time to review the various bills or to ask questions, let alone to debate the content.

I understand the COVID-19 crisis demands we have the financial resources in place to respond appropriately. However, we must ensure that decisions on what programs may require additional funding and which areas of the budget may need to be cut, are not made in a vacuum.

Under the state's constitution, the Executive Branch wields enormous power in developing a budget, but our Democracy provides that the Legislature have a voice as well. Despite my best efforts on behalf of my constituents, the best interests of the citizens we are supposed to be serving were disregarded.

While the budget does provide funding for critical programs such as health care, education and infrastructure, I could not support the increased financial burdens placed on taxpayers, the increased cost and obstacles placed upon small businesses, the uncertainties placed upon our local governments and school districts, and most significantly, the abdication of legislative responsibility by granting additional authority to the governor.

Now, and always, New Yorkers deserve much more from their government.