



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo statement on 2020-21 New York State Budget

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO April 5, 2020

| ISSUE: **2020-2021 NEW YORK STATE BUDGET, POLICY IN BUDGET, SCHOOL FUNDING**

ALBANY - New York State Senate Deputy Minority Leader Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, released the following statement today regarding the 2020-21 New York State Budget:

“This year's budget process presented a number of unique, unforeseen and significant challenges, primarily due to the public health crisis facing our state. While an agreement on a \$178 billion budget has been reached, there were too many uncertainties and negatives for me to support it and the method and manner in which it was presented.

A recent New York Times editorial stated that the Governor and Legislature 'should pass a streamlined budget and fight their policy battles another day.' I couldn't agree more and have been urging the Governor to do so. Unfortunately, even with so much uncertainty swirling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, he and the majorities in the Legislature used the budget as a mechanism to include a number of controversial and contentious policy-related items such as taxpayer-funded political campaigns, an increase in the power and authority that the Governor has over state government and additional burdens on small businesses. I feel it would have been much more prudent to address, discuss and debate these and other policy items openly and transparently in an appropriate period in context of the crisis. At this time, our attention should be focused on the safety and well-being of all residents.

Regrettably, other important issues such as a complete repeal of the ill-conceived and unworkable bail legislation were not agreed to and there was no substantive tax relief. At a time when the coronavirus crisis has created tremendous challenges for children, parents and educators, money from the federal government that was intended to enhance the state's share of education spending was instead used to offset money that the Governor cut from schools. Additionally, the Legislature has granted the Governor the authority to deprive local governments of much needed funding for roads and bridges. This is funding that our communities will rely upon to get our economy up and running again in the near future.

Due to this year's unorthodox legislative session and given the national crisis that we are confronting, there will be a need for additional initiatives and funding from the federal and state governments to support and help residents, businesses, local governments and taxpayers. I will continue to advocate for such assistance and additional resources that can help our communities, businesses, economy and state recover once this public health crisis subsides."

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