



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

Statement by Senator George Borrello on Senate's One-House Budget

GEORGE M. BORRELLO March 14, 2022

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**



ALBANY – New York State Senator George Borrello issued the following statement on the Senate’s One-House Budget proposal, which passed today:

“With New York State residents and businesses continuing to run for the exits in record numbers and a budget surplus of over \$11 billion, the Senate had the opportunity in its One-House Budget to craft a fiscally responsible plan that addressed the state’s affordability

crisis while also making key investments in critical areas.

“Instead, they’ve advanced a massive \$229 billion budget with an unsustainable level of spending - 11 percent higher than last year’s record-breaking budget --- and which creates new recurring spending that the state will be unable to support once federal relief funds run out. This shortsighted approach sets the stage for painful shortfalls in the near future and is reckless against our current backdrop of soaring inflation and energy costs and looming global uncertainties.

“There are certainly worthy investments in this budget that I support, including the acceleration of the middle-class income tax cuts as proposed by the Governor and maintained in this budget, \$200 million for the Small Business Pandemic Relief program and a temporary suspension of the state portion of the gas tax. These efforts will provide a measure of relief as households and small businesses see their already-stretched budgets hurt by ever-rising inflation.

“I was especially encouraged that the proposed budget includes repeal of the fiber optic right-of-way fee that has been such a roadblock to expanding rural broadband access. My advocacy on this issue has been ongoing for two years as the pandemic made lack of internet access a genuine crisis for families without coverage. As three-way negotiations move forward, it is crucial that this measure remain in the final budget.

“It is disappointing that the Majority rejected our requests to use some of the state’s surplus funds to pay down the \$9 billion pandemic-driven debt of our state’s Unemployment Insurance Fund (UI). This debt was the result of unprecedented circumstances, which is why more than 32 other states have used some of their federal pandemic relief funds to pay down their own UI trust fund debts. Unless New York’s leaders follow suit, this debt will be an anchor around the necks of our small businesses and our state’s recovery.

“Ending the exodus of residents and jobs from New York State can only be achieved if we make a concerted effort to lower taxes and fees while limiting the growth of government. The Senate’s proposed budget is a textbook example of the out-of-control, election year spending that has made our state the most expensive and tax-heavy in the nation. For these reasons, I could not support it.”