



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham Welcomes FY2024 State Budget for Helping New Yorkers to “Progress and Prosper”

PETE HARCKHAM May 3, 2023

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*Albany, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham, along with his colleagues in the State Legislature, passed the FY2024 State Budget overnight. Included in the fiscal plan are funding initiatives that support education, improve healthcare access and create more economic opportunities while also focusing on issues like affordability, public safety and climate change.

“Many New Yorkers, especially middle-class workers, students and seniors, are still struggling to get back on their feet and recover economically and emotionally from the Covid-19 pandemic, and this new State Budget addresses their needs,” said Harckham. “The best way to strengthen our communities statewide is to support our workforce and small businesses, help children succeed in school and make important and equitable investments in areas that truly make a difference in people’s lives—housing, mental health and our environment. Those are some of the priorities addressed in this budget, and I thank Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for her leadership during this budget process.”

Many of the initiatives in the new budget will have a strong and positive impact on the 40th Senate District (SD40), Harckham noted, particularly in areas such as rising utility costs, public safety, youth programs, volunteer firefighters and veterans.

## EDUCATION

- Total amount of school aid statewide is \$43.5 billion, up from \$31.5 last year
- Total amount of school aid in SD40 is \$530 million, up \$80 million (18%) from last year (including a 74.4% increase for Universal Pre-K), with all school districts in SD40 receiving an increase
- \$135 million to support school meals for all in high-need districts

“Our commitment to education in New York is an investment in the future for all of us,” said Harckham. “This is the third year of historic increases in state aid to local schools, helping to ensure a quality education regardless of zip code. Senator Shelley Mayer, chair of the Senate Education Committee, deserves special recognition and thanks for her work on behalf of the state’s students and educators.”

## HEALTHCARE

- \$100.7 million for women’s reproductive healthcare providers and expanded reproductive healthcare access for SUNY and CUNY students, as well as over-the-counter contraception.
- \$1 billion for mental healthcare, the largest investment in a generation, to increase inpatient psychiatric treatment capacity, dramatically expanding outpatient services, and boosting insurance coverage
- \$500 million to support additional aid for distressed providers
- 4% COLA increases for employees to address the recruitment and retention crisis affecting frontline healthcare agencies

“Safeguarding the health and well-being of New Yorkers is a major component of this budget,” said Harckham. “These investments will improve the quality of life for many New Yorkers.”

## AFFORDABILITY

- Increasing the minimum wage by \$2 over the next three years
- Strengthening child care resources with \$500 million toward a workforce retention grant program
- Expanding the Empire Child Tax credit to children under four years old
- Continuing to phase in a decrease in personal income taxes for working and middle-class families

“We know that middle-class workers and families have been hit hard by rising costs across the board,” said Harckham. “Our efforts to help them are balanced by our concerns for small business owners, many of whom are also struggling to get by.”

## FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- Improving the Climate Cap-and-Invest Program by directing the spending of any proceeds from any emission reduction programs established by the state to ensure that consumers receive rebates and to make the state more resilient against climate risk
- Implementing the All-Electric Buildings Act to prohibit the installation of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems (any equipment or infrastructure excluding cooking equipment used for combustion or supply of fossil fuels) in new buildings starting December 31, 2025 for new buildings of seven stories or less, and December 31, 2028 for all new buildings regardless of size or building type
- Enacted the Build Public Renewables Act to empower the New York Power Authority to direct, plan, build, and operate renewable energy projects to support the state in meeting generation targets in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and the Climate Action Council's Scoping plan. It also seeks to provide adequate and reliable supply of renewable energy and capacity in the state, and support the REACH program to give low and middle-income bill credits from the proceeds of Renewable Projects.

"New York will continue to lead the nation in terms of fighting climate change and protecting our environment in the new state budget, which contains transformative initiatives, including new all-electric buildings, cap and invest for greenhouse gases and building public renewables," said Harckham. "There is more work to be done, but we cannot wait any longer to make the bold, necessary changes that will lead to a cleaner, more sustainable future for all of us."

#### HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE AND TENANT PROTECTIONS

- \$40 million for the Homeowner Protection Program
- \$25 million for a First-Time Homeowners Program

- \$391 million in funding for Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to cover Covid-era arrears for NYCHA, other public housing authorities, private tenants, and Section 8 tenants.

“Helping homeowners and tenants stay in their homes is essential to supporting and enriching the life of our communities while bolstering small business owners on Main Street,” said Harckham.

## PUBLIC SAFETY & FIRST RESPONDERS

- \$347 million to fund evidence-based gun violence reduction programs
- \$118 million to support a capital fund for volunteer firefighters
- \$2.7 million for the Westchester County Policing Program for increased parkway patrols
- \$90,000 for Legal Services of the Hudson Valley’s domestic violence project
- Allowing the Office of Fire Control and Prevention the option of providing a training stipend to volunteer firefighters

“Our first responders deserve our utmost support when it comes to financial resources, new technologies and training,” said Harckham. “Protecting our residents day and night is one of the most important aspects of responsible governance, and the investments we make along these lines is key to upholding the law and fighting crime.”

## SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- \$2.4 million for 2-1-1 community service information hosted by United Way of Westchester and Putnam
- \$400,000 for the Legal Services of the Hudson Valley’s housing and kinship caregivers service

- \$260,000 for the Westchester County Youth Bureau
- \$1 million for ArtsWestchester

“This new budget acknowledges the challenges we are facing, and how important it is to continue safeguarding our residents while creating opportunities for them,” said Harckham. “New York State continues to move forward by making proper investments and looking for ways to support those who live and work here.”