



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, Senate colleagues continue to call for close watch on state's response to migrant crisis

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 22, 2023

| ISSUE: **MIGRANT CRISIS**



We believe it's critical, from the outset, to have in place a careful auditing and fully public accounting of taxpayer dollars being spent in response to a crisis that is only going to get worse and where the costs are only going to skyrocket.

Albany, N.Y., May 22—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) today joined Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and members of the Senate Republican Conference to urge state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli to undertake a full, transparent, and public accounting of taxpayer dollars being spent on the ongoing migrant crisis.

Senate Republicans also introduced several pieces of legislation in response to the growing crisis.

O'Mara said, "Governor Hochul is making a lot of promises, especially to counties and taxpayers, about how the state intends to handle the growing migrant crisis. Unfortunately, this state has a long history of broken promises to counties and taxpayers. We believe it's critical, from the outset, to have in place a careful auditing and fully public accounting of taxpayer dollars being spent in response to a crisis that is only going to get worse and where the costs are only going to skyrocket."

In a letter (see attached copy of letter above) to DiNapoli, O'Mara and his Senate Republican colleagues requested a full accounting of taxpayer dollars being used by the state to respond to the migrant crisis. In an effort to keep the public informed, they requested that every dollar spent be tracked, updated, and made public by the Comptroller's office.

Senate Republican Leader Ortt said, "The handling of this crisis has been a failure of leadership from Democrats on the state and federal level. It's been exacerbated by a complete lack of transparency and communication. With \$1 billion or more of taxpayer money being used, the public deserves a full and accurate accounting of exactly what those funds are being used for and who is receiving them."

The State Budget adopted earlier this month included \$1 billion for reimbursement of 29 percent of the costs related to the migrant crisis for New York City as follows: \$741 million for shelter costs \$162 million for the National Guard, \$137 million for health care, \$26 million in public assistance, and \$25 million for relocation of families to permanent housing.

In their letter to DiNapoli, the Senate Republicans wrote, "While New York City has chosen to be a sanctuary city and has been more than willing to accept the influx of migrants from

the southern border crisis, few other municipalities in the State have made such designation. As such, the rest of the State should not be subjected to the inability of New York City to provide care to these individuals.”

The senators also announced several new pieces of legislation will be introduced to address the crisis, including bills that would:

- > Prohibit the housing of migrants on SUNY campuses;
- > Prohibit the housing of migrants in K-12 schools in New York City;
- > Prohibit the housing of migrants in K-12 schools throughout the state; and
- > Institute the New Yorkers Combating Alien Recidivism and Ending Sanctuary (NY CARES) Act, prohibits local governments and entities thereof, including sheriff's departments, municipal police departments and district attorney's offices, from adopting laws or policies which impede or interfere with the enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Last week, the Senate Republican Conference sent a letter to Hochul requesting transparency on the decisions being made around the migrant crisis. They also introduced legislation to ensure local control by clarifying a local state of emergency supersedes one declared by the governor when the two are in conflict, as well as to protect vulnerable populations from being displaced in order to house migrants.