

Senator Cleare Secures Funding for Her District and the State

May 2, 2023

ALBANY, NEW YORK- Throughout this year's elongated budget process, Senator Cleare has been a vocal advocate for the betterment of her district and the state, continuously pushing for improvements in various sectors including healthcare, education, and social services. Her contributions resulted in securing funding for Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists, Universal School Meals, the cessation of the Executive's charter school proposal, and the creation of a Youth Jobs Connector Program through the State Department of Labor. She was able to secure grants for many deserving local cultural and educational institutions including, but not limited to, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Harlem Week, SAGE, PA'LANTE Harlem, The Boys and Girls Club of Harlem, Safety Net Hospitals such as Harlem Hospital and The New Jewish Home.

The Senator was proud to have helped secure record levels of Education Funding to her district with the full funding of Foundation Aid for public schools for the first time, and the largest annual School Aid allocation of \$34.5 billion. Additionally, the Senator has been hard at work ensuring that important legislation made it into the FY 2023-24 budget. She sponsored two bills, in particular, that have inspired adoptions in the budget. The first will increase funding for healthcare facilities and ensure that all residents have access to quality healthcare. This section of the budget establishes the allowance of a mechanism for reducing an applicant's income by out-of-pocket medical and prescription drug expenses when determining eligibility for SCRIE/DRIE. The second is a bill she introduced in 2022 to empower patients in those situations where insurance companies delay or deny treatment subject to prior authorizations. The adopted proposal cuts through administrative red tape, curtails bureaucratic delay, makes sure any appeals are handled by a specialist in the correct medical field, and ensures that the needs of patients come before profits.

As Chair of the Senate Aging Committee, she supported \$13 million to be allocated to support an 8.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for human services workers and \$2 million to support the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP). However, she was able to win \$14 million for the COLA and \$5 million in funding for LTCOP, among other victories for older adults.

Senator Cleare has been a strong advocate for her district and the state, and she is proud to have secured this funding and advanced these bills. "I am proud to announce this funding for my district and the state. These initiatives will help to strengthen our community and improve the lives of our residents," said Senator Cleare. "I am committed to working tirelessly for my constituents and the state, and I will continue to fight for the resources and policies that will make a real difference in people's lives."

Senator Cleare further noted that these are just some of the budget highlights, and there is much more to be proud of—such as policy changes and funding in critical areas like housing, MWBEs and small business support, afterschool and so much more. "The fight will continue in the final five weeks of Session to do even more. You can be sure that I will be working to secure and deliver resources to the district and the people of New York State."

For any questions regarding the budget or any legislation, please contact Chris LaBarge at labarge@nysenate.gov or 212 222-7315 ext. 2445. -END-