

The 2019 Legislative Session in Albany was truly exciting. In January, I began a new role as Chairperson of the Senate Social Services Committee and immediately started tackling issues faced by the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

As a legislative body, my colleagues and I worked to pass a \$175 billion spending plan, meeting the April 1 budget deadline. Despite significant fiscal challenges, we addressed many New Yorkers' highest priorities while remaining within the 2% state spending cap. During this process, I served on the Human Services & Labor Budget Conference Committee and as an alternate on the Mental Hygiene Conference Committee. We held hearings and received testimony from advocates and organizations from across the state.

Additionally, I participated in discussions about more funding for schools, the MTA, and programs for seniors and youth. I am disappointed that we were unable to provide additional Foundation Aid for our schools, but I assure you that we will continue to advocate for full funding. Here is a summary of many important components of the Budget.

Many bills that I sponsored passed both the **Senate and Assembly** with bipartisan support:

**S1077** the *Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act*, which expands upon the existing provisions of alternative sentencing for domestic violence cases and further, allows judges to resentence currently incarcerated persons for offenses in which certain domestic violence criteria was a significant element of the offense. **Governor Cuomo signed this bill into law on May 14.**

**S1040** would prohibit employers from discriminating against domestic violence victims and require reasonable accommodations to be made for employee absences in connection with their status as a crime victim.

**S1092E** would prohibit performing a pelvic exam on an anesthetized or unconscious person without informed consent (with certain exceptions); would deem performing or supervising a pelvic exam without informed consent an act of professional misconduct, and would expand existing medical malpractice protections to include the performance or supervision of a non-consensual pelvic exam.

**S2387B** would require plain and conspicuous labeling of menstrual products with ingredients and percentages of components.

**S4641** would ensure that medical opinions of treating practitioners are given proper weight in the context of medical evaluations for public assistance employment programs.

**S5858** extends for two-years, authorization for the NYS Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking, a multi-agency body charged with coordinating state agency responses to human trafficking.

**S6472** would allow certain youth who were discharged from foster care (age 16) or those who have aged out (age 18) to reenter foster care to mitigate homelessness or reduce the risk of homelessness.

**S6167** would exempt the physical injury requirement for victims of unlawful surveillance crimes so that they are eligible for reimbursement through the Office of Victim Services.

**S5402** would exempt balances in NY Achieving a Better Life Experience (NY ABLE) accounts; **S1089** would apply to qualified tuition accounts (529 accounts), and **S6443** would exempt Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) income by those under the age of 24.

**S4809A** would, for purposes of determining public assistance levels, separate the unearned income of a child in kinship care within a public assistance household. This is to avoid financial harm to the household providing care.

**S6200** would require the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) to include in its annual report on the Mitchell-Lama program information regarding any limited-profit housing company that has either voluntarily dissolved (in a previous calendar year) or filed a notice of intent to dissolve (in the current calendar year).

**S4448** would make state teacher certifications permanent for lawful permanent residents who are otherwise qualified and eligible for such certification.

**S6243** requires the DMV to publish on its website information to assist individuals in determining whether a manufacturer has issued a safety recall on motor vehicles and related equipment, child safety seats, or tires. Further, DMV would be required to provide a conspicuous hyperlink to the National Transportation Safety Administration safety issues and recall website.

**S6560** makes conforming changes to state child support laws to comply with the federal Flexibility, Efficiency and Modernization in Child Support Enforcement Program rules and increases the federally-mandated program fee from \$25 to \$35 assessed on support collections.

**S6388** extends, for two years, sections of law authorizing the suspension of drivers' licenses for failure to pay child support.

**S1087** would establish a crime prevention program to provide small businesses with strategies, best practices, and other practical measures to help protect from a wide range of crimes. The NYS Urban Development

Corporation would be required to provide information on available financial assistance (grants, loans, subsidies) to help small businesses prevent crime on the premises or within close vicinity of their operations.

**The following bills** passed in the **Senate** only, but I will continue to work with colleagues and advocates to get them signed into law:

**S1086B** would provide an allowance of up to eighty dollars, every three months, for the purchase of diapers for a TANF-eligible child up to age 2.

**S4695** would require professional licensure of Vision Rehabilitation Professionals to ensure the safety and quality of service to those who are blind or partially sighted.

**S5552** would require the Department of Labor to contract with a third party to produce a self-sufficiency standard study to provide policymakers with detailed information on poverty in their communities as well as help individuals living in poverty to create a basic needs budget based on their location to help foster financial literacy and economic security.

**S1079** would require the NYS Department of Labor to produce a report on the Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEP) including details of available jobs, demand for program participation, and an analysis of future funding needs.

**S5443** would authorize the Office of Victim Services to reimburse victims up to \$2,500 of excess employment-related transportation expenses incurred due to injuries sustained resulting from a crime.

**S1054A** would make the unlawful installation of a gas meter a class B misdemeanor.

**S1082A** would require driver's education and defensive driving instructors to educate on proper behavior when stopped by a law enforcement officer as a part of instruction courses.

**S1085A** would add bodegas and delicatessens to the definition of food service establishments to establish parity with restaurant regulations.

Please let me know your opinion on any budgetary or legislative issue. You may also go to [www.persaud.nysenate.gov](http://www.persaud.nysenate.gov) for additional details and follow us on social media to keep updated with what we are doing across the district.

Have a Happy and Safe Summer!

Sincerely,





**Funding for K-12**

All students deserve access to a high-quality education. The Budget includes an additional \$1 billion for public education, for a total of \$27.9 billion. Additionally:

- Increases School Aid by over \$1 billion, or 3.8% and Foundation Aid by \$618 million, or 3.5%
- \$849 million for expanded Pre-K
- Three-year extension of mayoral accountability of NYC schools and additional governance reforms
- \$34.4 million for lunch programs and a new \$2.3 million program to cover the students’ share of reduced-price meals
- \$9 million increase to expand early college high schools
- \$5.8 million to help low-income students pay for AP exams

**Investing in Higher Education**

- Increased funding for CUNY and SUNY Community College Base Aid by \$100/FTE
- \$1.2 billion for Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)
- \$2 million for CUNY/SUNY child care centers
- Authorization for CUNY and SUNY to set reduced rates (or waive tuition) for dually enrolled high school and BOCES students
- Nearly \$10 million in restorations to SUNY programs including: Educational Opportunity Centers, Advanced Technology Training & Information Networking (ATTAIN) labs and Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)
- New laws and regulations governing the private companies that collect student loan debt

**Caring for our Seniors**

- \$8.5 million for grants and additional expenses for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) programs and Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORC) programs
- Funding for the work of local organizations, including JCC of Greater Coney Island, Live On NY, SAGE, and Jewish Association for Services for the Aged (JASA)

**Protecting Critical Health Funding**

- \$550 million to restore Medicaid cuts, which would have devastated the Borough and SD 19
- Codifying the Affordable Care Act and the New York Health Exchange in state law
- \$100 million for NYS OASAS to fight the opioid epidemic and other substance abuse services
- \$2 million for the Substance Abuse Prevention & Intervention Specialists (SAPIS) program in NYC schools and more than \$3.8 million for School-Based Health Centers
- Lowering the statutory threshold for elevated lead levels from 10 micrograms per deciliter to 5. This protects everyone
- Significant funds for research and programs to combat diseases including Sickle Cell, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, and Lupus

**Assisting New York’s Most Vulnerable**

- Domestic violence victims will no longer have to pay for certain services or be required to apply for public assistance to receive supportive and protective services
- A new \$3 million Families First Transition Fund to help foster care programs comply with the federal Family First Prevention Services Act
- Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) under the auspices of OMH, OPWDD, and OASAS will receive a 2% increase on January 1, 2020. DSPs and clinical staff will receive an added 2% increase in April 2020
- Over \$50 million restored for critical Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant programs
- The Legislature fought hard against a 10% cost-share requirement placed upon the City of New York for TANF expenditures necessary to ensure continued assistance, anti-poverty programs, job training, employment programs, and children’s services
- Funding for: The Hope Program, Kinship Navigator, Refugee Resettlement, Disability Advocacy Program (DAP), Settlement Houses, 2-1-1 Hotline, Met Council, Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services, Helen Keller Services for the Blind, Junior Achievement, Displaced Homemakers, YMCA Foundation, Boys & Girls Clubs, Citizens Committee for Children, YouthBuild and more







Justice Delivered

**Bail & Pre-trial Detention Reform:** elimination of cash bail for misdemeanors and non-violent felonies. We are ensuring that a person is not incarcerated because of an inability to pay. Law enforcement will be required to issue appearance tickets to most people charged with misdemeanors and class E felonies.

**The Right to a Speedy Trial:** new requirement that misdemeanor charges must be resolved within 90 days and felonies within 180 days. Thus, defendants will not sit in jail, waiting for a trial.

**Discovery Reform:** requiring both prosecutors and defendants to share all information in their possession well in advance of trial. And ensuring the protection of victims and witnesses from intimidation and other forms of coercion by providing prosecutors the ability to petition a court for a protective order.

Empowering New Yorkers to Stay in Their Homes

- Lawful Source of Income Non-Discrimination Act of 2019, which protects individuals receiving a lawful non-wage income or subsidies, including domestic violence survivors, veterans, elderly, and disabled individuals
- Increased funding for the Tenant Protection Unit to \$5.5 million
- \$20 million invested in foreclosure prevention services

Addressing the Scourge of Gun Violence

In direct response to my legislation to establish a Firearm Violence Research Institute, funding has been allocated to support this pioneering initiative. Further, nearly \$1.3 million is invested in Operation S.N.U.G./Cure Violence NYC; \$450,000 of which is dedicated to Brooklyn.

Fixing and Funding the MTA

Some areas of SD 19 are considered “transit deserts,” underserved by our current transit system. Albany and City Hall continue to discuss broader reforms to MTA operations, governance, and finances. All parties know that the MTA needs substantial funding to address much needed system-wide repairs and service improvements. The Budget provided \$969.9 million in operating support and \$1.48 billion for capital projects. The Budget includes a new tax on NYC homes valued higher than \$2 million; with a higher tax on homes valued at \$25 million or more, which will generate an additional \$243 million.

Budget legislation also established the Traffic Mobility Act, which will implement a congestion charge on nearly all vehicles entering Manhattan below 60th Street to support an estimated \$15 billion in funding for the subway, buses, LIRR and Metro-North. The new charge will not take effect until after 2020, which will allow for planning and public comments.

Protecting Our Environment & Natural Resources

- Ban on single-use plastic bags (with exemptions) with local authorization for a 5-cent paper bag fee. Because this policy may impact low and fixed income New Yorkers the most, funding is available for local efforts to distribute reusable bags to those in need. The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) will receive most of the proceeds from the bag fee
- \$500 million for clean water projects (\$3 billion total) and \$300 million for the EPF

Restoring Trust in State Government & Reforming the Electoral System

Building upon the election and campaign finance reforms the Senate approved earlier this year; we enacted additional measures to facilitate participation in the Democratic process:

- Creating a commission to implement public campaign financing
- Making upstate voting hours the same as NYC
- Requiring three hours of paid time off on Election Day
- \$10 million for early voting and \$14.5 million for e-poll books

Supporting NY Businesses

Investments to foster economic growth and job creation in Brooklyn and beyond:

- \$365,000 for the MWBE Development and Lending Program
- Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce programs
- \$4 million for the Workforce Development Institute (WDI)
- Resources to community banks and credit unions to increase lending in underserved communities

Stronger Labor Protections

Added privacy protections for unionized public employees by prohibiting the release of certain personal data that would, in turn, be used by outside organizations to harass and coerce members into leaving their respective union.

Photos included in this newsletter are from events and meetings with constituents, advocates or other public officials during the 2019 Legislative Session.



## FUNDING FOR STRONG LOCAL IMPACT

This year in Albany, Senator Roxanne Persaud secured funding to support the invaluable work of organizations and educational institutions serving the community in SD 19, further investing in our youth, vets, seniors, survivors of domestic violence and New Americans.

### Protecting Vulnerable New Yorkers

- Veterans' legal services offered by Brooklyn Defender Services
- Victims and survivors of domestic violence provided by Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc.
- Representation for New Americans by Mobilization for Justice and New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)
- Support for human service programs provided by the Met Council

### Education & Empowerment for All Ages

- Helen Keller Services for the Blind – support for IT upgrades and educational programs
- PS 194 – Raoul Wallenberg and PS 272 – Curtis Estabrook – assistance with classroom teaching expenses
- Brownsville Collaborative Middle School in partnership with Teens for Food Justice STEM program teaching hydroponic urban farming
- St. Francis College Summer Science Academy which provides STEM education to high school students
- No Kids Left Behind, Inc. youth development and extracurricular programs
- Sisters with Purpose community-based education programs
- Support for the My Extended Family afterschool program serving children of

one-parent households

- Elite Learners, Inc. STEM, robotics and youth re-entry educational programs
- BRIC | ARTS | MEDIA arts and cultural education programs for school-aged children
- The Hope Program adult transitional employment and job training programs

### Youth Civics

- A grant from Senator Persaud is bolstering NYPD Youth Explorers Programs in precincts throughout SD 19

### Additionally:

- Safe recreation and play spaces at NYCHA developments
- Recreational and computer equipment for several senior centers
- Health services for women across SD 19



New York State Senate  
Albany, NY 12247

### NEW YORK STATE SENATOR



# Roxanne J. Persaud

## SUMMER 2019 Newsletter

PRSRT-STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NEW YORK SENATE

### 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District

#### District Office

1222 East 96th St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11236  
Phone: (718) 649-7653

#### Albany Office

409 Legislative Office Bldg.  
Albany, NY 12247  
Phone: (518) 455-2788

**E-mail:** [Persaud@nysenate.gov](mailto:Persaud@nysenate.gov)  
**Web:** [Persaud.nysenate.gov](http://Persaud.nysenate.gov)

## SIGNIFICANT END-OF-SESSION ACTIONS

**Sexual Harassment.** The Senate took long-overdue action on workplace sexual harassment. We passed S6577, which removes the severe and pervasive standard from discriminatory and retaliatory harassment cases and authorizes punitive damages and attorney fees in employment discrimination actions. No longer will the fact that an individual has not made a complaint about the harassment to their employer, licensing agency, employment agency, or labor organization hinder or be determinative of whether such employer, licensing agency, employment agency or labor organization is liable. Employers will be required to provide a notice of sexual harassment prevention policies in the employees' primary language.

**Pay Equity.** We passed a number of bills to bring fairness to the workplace, including a ban on requests for a prospective employee's

salary or wage history (S6549); fair and equal compensation for public employees performing similar work (S6436); fair and equal pay for employees with protected class status (S5248B); and a new private right of action to ensure public employees receive equal pay (S456B).

**New Vaccination Law.** In response to the recent measles outbreak which infected hundreds of New Yorkers, the Legislature approved S2994A/A2317A to eliminate non-medical exemptions from vaccination requirements for children. The new law was signed by Governor Cuomo later that day. Please contact your child's school with any questions regarding new immunization requirements.

**New Rent Laws.** The Legislature passed the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection

Act of 2019 (S6458/A8281), which was immediately signed by Governor Cuomo. This legislation establishes permanent tenant protection regulations, repeals vacancy deregulation, reforms MCI rent increases, creates additional protections for all tenants throughout the state, and authorizes qualified communities outside of New York City to opt into rent stabilization.

**Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act.** This bold and historic climate change measure (S6559/A8429) will require an 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and "net-zero" emissions in all economic sectors across the state. Further, the legislation calls for programs to assist environmental justice and other disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by emissions and pollution.