



February 10, 2026

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of the State of New York
Executive Chamber
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Subject: Senate Republicans Budget Priorities

Dear Governor:

We are writing to urge you to include in the 30-day amendments of your Executive Budget the following proposals that will make New York more affordable, safer and expand educational opportunities for all New Yorkers.

Personal Income Tax Relief

Legislation that exempts state personal income tax on first \$50,000 for single filers and \$100,000 for married filing jointly. From the exemption to \$250,000 for single filers and \$500,000 for married filing jointly, lower income tax to 4%.

This proposal would provide a personal income tax cut for all New Yorkers. Any single filer making \$50,000 or less and couples making \$100,000 or less would no longer pay any state income tax - this covers most New Yorkers.

The proposal would be the single largest tax cut in state history and provide \$30 billion in tax relief to New York residents over its 10-year implementation without having to cut funding from vital state programs as its cost would be absorbed through natural growth of the economy.

This legislation would provide needed relief, especially to lower and middle-class families as New York State has the highest individual tax burden in the nation.

Utility Bill Relief

Legislation that requires the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to transfer any uncommitted funds

remaining in the Climate Investment Account at the close of a fiscal year back to ratepayers as bill credit. NYSERDA's Financial Plan for fiscal year 2025 indicates that the net position anticipated for NYSERDA at the end of FY2025 was over \$2 billion and in 2026 it will be \$2.2 billion. At a time when New Yorkers are having trouble paying their skyrocketing utility bills, these billions should be returned to ratepayers as credit on utility bills.

Legislation that requires utilities to return to ratepayers any unspent money that the PSC required the utility companies collect from ratepayers to fund NYSERDA programs.

Legislation that provides a one-year Utility Bill Tax and Surcharge Holiday. In 2022, when New Yorkers were facing \$5 for a gallon of gas, the State enacted a gas tax holiday. Today, as New Yorkers face rapidly increasing utility bills, the State should do the same with utility bills.

These three proposals would provide real, substantial relief to ratepayers that are facing sky high utility bills.

Property Tax Relief

Legislation that freezes property taxes for three years. New Yorkers pay some of the highest property taxes in the nation. Of the sixteen counties with the highest median property tax payments nationwide, six are in New York State: Nassau, New York, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester. In each of these counties the median property tax payments all exceed \$10,000.¹

Make Housing More Affordable

Legislation that:

1. Repeals the All-Electric Building mandate;
2. Re-imposes the 100-foot rule to lower the cost of new home's natural gas hook up;
3. Allows developers to comply with the less expensive 2020 Energy Code; and
4. Provides comprehensive SEQR reform for all buildings, not just residential homes.

Allowing developers to comply with the 2020 Energy Code, instead of the newly enacted 2025 Energy Code, will provide \$7,400² in savings on a single-family home, on top of the \$20,000³ that will be saved through repealing the All-Electric Building mandate. Re-imposing the 100-foot rule for natural gas hookups will lower the cost of new homes by as much as \$14,000.⁴ Comprehensive SEQR reform will provide developers with more definitive timelines and remove administrative barriers that hamper housing developments.

Repeal Costly Green Energy Mandates

Legislation that repeals:

1. Green energy mandates such as the electric vehicle mandate and the electric bus mandate;
2. The \$2,340 per year commuter tax on drivers that work in Manhattan; and

¹Yushkov, Andrey, *Property Taxes by State and County, 2025*. The Tax Foundation.

² *Energy Savings and Cost Effectiveness Analysis of the 2024 New York State Conservation Construction Code, Residential Provisions*. Final Report October 30, 2024.

³ Plants, Ron. "State Law Forces 'All Electric' for 'Most New Building' Construction in January 2026. [NY to require all-electric new buildings by 2026 | wgrz.com](https://www.wgrz.com/news/state-law-forces-all-electric-for-most-new-building-construction-in-january-2026)

⁴ Takemura, Alison, *New Yorkers to Stop Paying for Other People's Gas Hookups Under New Bill*. Canary Media. 25 June 2025.

3. The statute in Environmental Conservation Law that requires the state to implement a Cap and Invest (tax) program that will cost New Yorkers up to \$126 billion over the first 11 years of the program.⁵

Cut Fraud and Waste from Government Spending Programs

Legislation that requires the State to retain an independent private firm to conduct a comprehensive audit of government spending programs such as Medicaid and CDPAP to rid such programs of fraud and abuse and refer any wrongdoing to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

The State budget has increased \$86 billion over the past seven years. Medicaid costs in New York have skyrocketed from \$10 billion to \$120 billion since 1988 even though that same timespan the State's population only increased from 18 million to just under 20 million residents.

Comprehensive Regulatory Reform

Legislation that establishes a Commission on Regulatory Efficiency to examine state regulations and identify wasteful and unnecessary state regulations. New York's complex and onerous regulatory environment is frequently cited by private businesses as a major obstacle to operating and expanding in the State. By reducing the regulatory burden on businesses, the State can attract new businesses and keep the ones it already has.

New York is second in the nation with 300,000 rules and regulations.

PROTECT Act

Legislation establishes the Pretrial Risk Overview for Threat Evaluation, Custody and Treatment (PROTECT) Act. The legislation would create a risk assessment instrument which could be used by courts to make decisions regarding pretrial custody and prevent reoffending during pretrial release.

Raise the Age Reform

Legislation that provides needed reform to the state's Raise the Age Law. The reform would require juvenile offenders to be tried in adult court after they have previously been arrested for a felony that was removed to family court and to require juvenile offenders to be tried in adult court after committing two separate misdemeanors unless there are mitigating circumstances. The legislation also expands the crimes committed by juvenile offenders that can go to adult court to include using or possessing a firearm.

Parole Reform

Legislation that reforms the State's parole process to ensure dangerous felons are not being released back into society when they still pose a danger to public safety. This can be accomplished by repealing the 'Less is More' law, requiring unanimous agreement by the parole board to release an inmate onto parole, prohibiting parolees from being prematurely discharged from parole and ensuring victims and their families have more of a say in the parole process.

⁵ Courtin, Kate. *Despite \$1 Billion Budgeted for Clean Energy, New York's Delayed Cap-and-Invest Rollout is Costing Residents Billions More in Savings*. May 16, 2025. Environmental Defense Fund

Expand access to Gifted & Talented Schools

Legislation that expands access to Gifted and Talented Schools.

Gifted & Talented Schools provide an avenue for children in low- and middle-income families to achieve their full potential. At a time when the Mayor of New York City wants to end Gifted and Talented Schools, it is important we double down on these important schools.

In every region of the State, we hear from New Yorkers that they are struggling to afford everyday necessities. Unfortunately, the Executive Budget does not go far enough to reduce the cost of living, including expenses such as utilities, housing, and insurance. The budget also fails to address New York's nation leading tax burden or roll back problematic criminal justice reforms that have made our streets less safe. By advancing these proposals, we can begin to provide real relief for New York families and businesses and ensure they are safe and prosperous.

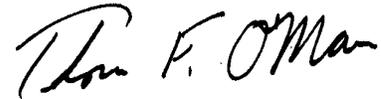
Sincerely,



Robert G. Ort
Senate Minority Leader
62nd District



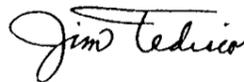
Senator Andrew Lanza
24th District



Senator Tom O'Mara
58th District



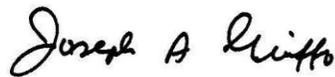
Senator George Borrello
57th District



Senator Jim Tedisco
44th District



Senator Daniel G. Stec.
45th District



Senator Joseph Griffo
53rd District



Senator Mario Mattera
2nd District



Senator Mark Walczyk
49th District



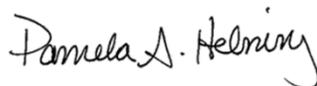
Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick
9th District



Senator Dean Murray
3rd District



Senator Steve Rhoads
5th District



Senator Pam Helming
54th District



Senator Rob Rolison
39th District



Senator Peter Oberacker
51st District



Senator Anthony Palumbo
1st District



Senator Jack M. Martins
7th District



Senator Patrick Gallivan
60th District



Senator Alexis Weik
8th District



Senator Jake Ashby
43rd District



Senator Steve Chan
17th District



Senator William Weber
38th District