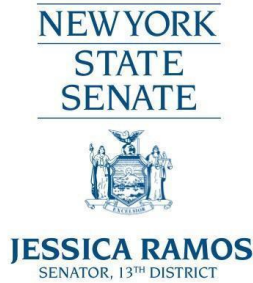


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 1/5/2022  
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## JESSICA RAMOS, CHAIR OF THE SENATE LABOR COMMITTEE GIVES RESPONSE TO STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS

**QUEENS, NY**— Following Governor Kathy Hochul’s first State of the State address, State Senator Jessica Ramos (D, WF - SD13), issued the following statement:

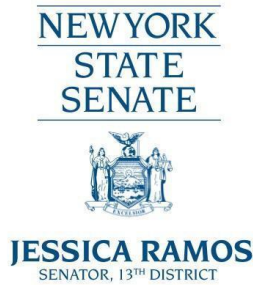
“Like many New Yorkers, I listened to Governor Hochul’s first State of the State address with cause for optimism. To date, her tenure as the first female Governor of New York has delivered a quick and transparent dispersal of rental relief, Excluded Workers Fund dollars, and support for undocumented New Yorkers who were impacted by Ida. Transparency and efficacy in the first months of the Hochul administration set the tone as we kicked off this session, and although there were some glaring gaps in her agenda for our State, I remain convinced that we can be effective partners in building a just recovery and pulling our state through the ongoing pandemic.

The State of the State recognized and shared promising developments on issues that I have worked on, and am personally invested in as the Senator for the 13th Senate District and Chair of the Labor Committee.

First, the proposed revival of at least part of the Regional Planning Association’s Triborough Express tells me that my community was heard in our rally against the LaGuardia AirTrain. After I organized support from my colleagues in the Senate, the Governor paused the plan and has now offered an exciting, viable solution to address the transit deserts that plague Queens and Brooklyn. I applaud the Governor’s willingness to take on big infrastructure projects, and urge her not to limit herself to just cover most of Brooklyn and part of Queens. Use the existing right-of-way to extend the line fully from Bay Ridge to the Bronx. This is a legacy project, and Governor Hochul should not pass up the opportunity to connect three transit-starved boroughs.

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When Governor Hochul signed my bill to grant the State Liquor Authority the ability to issue temporary liquor licenses to bars and restaurants in New York City, catching it up with the standard practice in the rest of the state and throwing small businesses a much-needed lifeline. Today's announcement regarding the return of to-go drinks, as well as the \$1 billion investment in small business seed and capital funding is of tremendous comfort to the small businesses that give neighborhoods across New York State their rich character.

As Chair of the Senate Labor Committee, I have worked on legislation to grant immigrants and other historically excluded workers access to the benefits of the labor movement. The proposed tax credit for farm workers overtime strikes a balance between acknowledging that these workers, just like any other, deserve a 40 hour workweek and that we can build a path to that in a way that preserves our food security and supports New York's farmers. Union membership is a path to the middle class, so I am thrilled to see the proposal of an apprenticeship targeted at bringing immigrant New Yorkers into the labor movement.

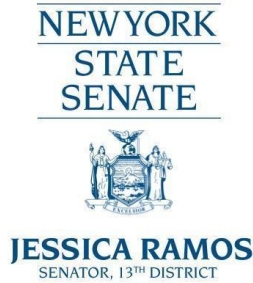
Although there is much to celebrate, I will be pursuing more firm commitments on issues I believe are critical to the working families of this state.

First, we need an additional \$3 billion to provide relief to the essential workers who were excluded from life-saving pandemic unemployment insurance and federal stimulus money. We know that the first round of the Excluded Workers Fund pumped millions of dollars into every corner of the state, and 99% of the recipients were qualified as Tier One applicants - meaning they were able to prove that they paid taxes in 2019, 2020, and 2021. Workers upstate were not able to access EWF funds at the same speed that workers downstate were, so we need the remaining \$3 billion from our initial \$5 billion ask to be included in the budget in 2022.

Additionally, I cannot help but think of the many anxious constituent calls my team receives about the impending end to the eviction moratorium. Quite frankly, our shelters, housing courts and housing market are not ready for the wave of imminent evictions that will happen without the prioritization of Good Cause Eviction and an extension to the moratorium. Although admittedly the State of the State did outline plans to tackle the housing crisis in our state, it is unlikely that those programs will be up and running when the moratorium expires.

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I also want to applaud the governor on her efforts to repair the harms of mass incarceration by committing to pass the Clean Slate Act which will wipe the records of those who have demonstrated that they have not re-entered criminal activity since release. Also, providing tuition assistance for incarcerated people will allow them to be job ready when they leave. As important as job opportunities and resources are for the formerly incarcerated, the governor also needs to recognize that prison is not the answer and that investing in Treatment not Jails for communities left behind is critical.

Finally, Governor Hochul has an opportunity to be a national leader in addressing the child care crisis - and it is a crisis. The proposal outlined in today's State of the State hits on a few of the necessary steps, but does not go nearly far enough to address the scope of the burden faced by parents and providers. Making child care available on all SUNY campuses is a wonderful idea, but because of current minimum work requirements, many students don't meet the work requirements necessary to grant them access to child care subsidies. I look forward to continued opportunities to work with the Governor and her team on the Early Learning Child Care Act (S.7615/Assembly bill number forthcoming), which I know will support her vision both of attracting and keeping talented people as well as rebuilding our economy better than it was before the pandemic.

This is going to be an exciting year in Albany. I am excited to get to work for the people of New York State and hold Governor Hochul to her word building a better, fairer, more inclusive version of the 'New York Dream'."

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