



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy A. Cooney

## Senator Cooney Responds to Governor Hochul's 'State of the State Address'

JEREMY A. COONEY January 9, 2024

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(ALBANY, NY) - Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester), attended Governor Hochul's 2024 'State of the State' address today. The Governor shared her priorities for the 2024 legislative session and budget including a **\$50 million investment into fighting child poverty**, highlighting Rochester as one of the core communities to receive these funds.

Senator Cooney shared, “It pays to have a governor from upstate! I’m very pleased to hear that investing in reducing child poverty will be a priority for Governor Hochul. This is long overdue and what our community has been asking for. Rochester welcomes a partnership with the state to finally make the strides necessary to break the cycle of generational poverty. I look forward to this legislative session and the many ways my priority legislation coincides with the Governor’s plans. This is good news for Rochester and New York State.”

Notable legislation of Senator Cooney’s that connects to priorities Governor Hochul shared include:

- **Expand the Empire State Child Tax Credit (S771)** - Senator Cooney would like to increase the tax credit to families with young children. With the Governor’s investment in reducing child poverty, expanding the Child Tax Credit will also put more money into the pockets of local families.
- **Equity in Leave Act (S921A)** - This bill will increase temporary disability for the first time since the 1980's, aligning the state’s antiquated disability benefit in New York with its more recent Paid Family Leave benefit through a phased-in approach that gives employers and employees time to adjust. Governor Hochul is planning to prioritize work on disability benefits.
- **First Time Home Buyer Tax Savings Program (S6574)** - Senator Cooney’s first time home buyer program would authorize first time home buyers to establish savings accounts to buy their first home combined with a personal income tax deduction for deposits into such accounts. Understanding that housing is a critical issue across NY, the Governor and

Senator Cooney would like to prioritize legislation aimed to combat this issue.

- **Car Theft Prevention Act (S7715A)** - This bill adds the felony offenses of criminal possession of stolen property in the first through fourth degrees and grand larceny as qualifying offenses that can trigger bail consideration by local judges, connecting seamlessly with the Governor's anti-shoplifting priority.

**Cannabis Enforcement Comment:** Governor Hochul announced a push for increased enforcement around unlicensed cannabis retail stores. I support her work to expand options for local law enforcement to work with the state to shut these stores down.

**Public Transit Comment:** The Governor announced funding for expanded transit options in New York City. While Senator Cooney is pleased to hear about investment in public transportation, Upstate bus systems are critically lacking, requiring funding to increase route frequency. He plans to advocate for an expansion in that investment to serve all of New York's residents, especially upstate residents requiring transit to participate in the workforce.

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