



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

"Staggering": Senator O'Mara blasts Governor Hochul's proposed state aid cuts to local schools

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 1, 2024



Senator O'Mara warned that, if enacted, Governor Hochul's budget will result in "significant property tax increases" and exacerbate the already alarming, nation-leading exodus of New Yorkers to more affordable states.

Albany, N.Y., February 1—At today's legislative budget hearing on the elementary and secondary education portion of Governor Kathy Hochul's 2024-2025 proposed state budget, legislators heard testimony from New York State Department of Education Commissioner Betty Rosa and other top education department officials.

At today's hearing, Senator O'Mara, who serves as the Ranking Member on the Senate Finance Committee, sharply criticized Governor Hochul's plan to implement severe cuts in state aid to local school districts across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions he represents and statewide – cuts, Senator O'Mara and other legislators noted, that fall disproportionately hard on many small and rural school districts already overburdened by small tax bases and already high property taxes.

Senator O'Mara expressed several criticisms of Governor Hochul's proposed education cuts, including:

- > noting that the Governor's plan is "nothing short of bait-and-switch and false advertising" as he outlined many of the devastating cuts to districts he represents covering seven counties in the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions;

- > stressing that the Governor's proposed cuts are "staggering" to local schools and that the plan overall is "not right, it's not equitable, it's not fair";

- > warning that local school districts also face additional, impending skyrocketing costs in other areas, including potentially explosive increases in health insurance provider costs;

- > that, if enacted, the Governor's budget will result in "significant property tax increases" and exacerbate the already alarming, nation-leading exodus of New Yorkers to more affordable states; and

- > questioning the Governor's budget priorities while highlighting that the proposed cuts in education aid cuts are being put forth in a budget plan that, on the other hand, calls for providing \$2.4 billion to provide assistance and services to meeting New York's burgeoning migrant crisis as well as hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars for other questionable priorities.

Watch **HERE**.