



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: Senate Democrat 'one-house' budget just another tax-and-spend disaster for taxpayers (WATCH)

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 14, 2024

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Senator O'Mara serves as the Ranking Member on the Senate Finance Committee.

Albany, N.Y., March 14—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C-Big Flats), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, today warned that a “one-house” budget resolution being approved today by the Senate Democrat majority proposes billions of dollars in new state spending that is “unsustainable and unwarranted” and will continue to devastate state and local economies, and drive more and more New Yorkers out of the state.

O'Mara, leading debate for the Senate Republican Conference on the floor of the Senate, said that Senate Democrats are calling for spending far beyond the approximately \$233-billion spending plan proposed by Governor Kathy Hochul in her 2024-2025 Executive Budget, which is already roughly \$4 billion higher than New York's current spending plan.

According to the Senate GOP finance staff, the Senate Democrat budget is calling for an approximately \$246-billion state budget this year or at least \$13 billion higher than Hochul's proposed budget. If enacted, it would mark the highest-ever state budget. Senate Democrats would pay for the massive spending increase through a combination of income and corporate tax increases, one-time revenue raisers, and redirecting state "rainy day" and other reserve and settlement funds, among other actions.

O'Mara said, "My Senate Republican colleagues and I were concerned that Governor Hochul's out-of-control state spending plan would only skyrocket once the Legislature's Democrat majorities, the biggest spenders in state history, got their hands on it. Here they go. Governor Hochul's proposed Executive Budget is a plan of misguided and misplaced priorities, but the Senate Democrats try to correct it with higher taxing and even higher spending. Their plan rightly restores critical commitments to local school districts, local roads and bridges, and other fundamental priorities and responsibilities. But their relentless taxing-and-spending spree is not the dose of fiscal common sense, discipline, and responsibility that's called for to get this state back on track. It's irrational and unreasonable. It doesn't respond to the issues of affordability for everyday New York families, taxpayers, and workers. It won't stop the exodus of New York taxpayers to other states, and it risks further devastating already hard-hit state and local economies."

The Democrat majorities in the Senate and Assembly are approving their respective one-house resolutions in advance of final budget negotiations with Hochul. The one-house budgets traditionally stake out legislative priorities entering the negotiations on a final

budget scheduled to be in place by April 1.

O'Mara stressed that the direction being pursued by Hochul and legislative leaders sets the stage for a final state budget this year that would significantly increase short- and long-term state government spending, add billions of dollars to a state debt burden that is already one of the nation's highest, and risk additional long-term costs for already overburdened counties and local property taxpayers.

O'Mara noted the fact that since New York State government fell under one-party, all-Democrat control in 2018, total government spending has increased by 44% or roughly \$74 billion.

O'Mara and the Senate Republican conference again warned that Hochul and the Legislature's Democrat majorities are focusing on tax hikes and unrestrained spending instead of providing broad-based tax relief to spark job creation and economic growth, restraining state spending, tackling unfunded state mandates on localities to ease the burden on local property taxpayers, and reducing New York's long-term debt load.

O'Mara said, "The direction that Governor Hochul and Albany Democrats are laying out for the future of New York would spell even harder times ahead for state and local taxpayers, small businesses and manufacturers, and already hard-pressed upstate communities, economies, and workers. New York remains one of the highest-taxed states in America. We are one of the most overregulated states in the nation. Our local governments and local property taxpayers continue to foot the bill for one of the country's heaviest burdens of unfunded state mandates. It's troubling to me that the governor and top legislative Democrats keep talking about higher taxes, and higher and higher state government spending, at a time when the priority should be a long-term, steady, sustainable future for upstate, middle-class communities, families, workers, and taxpayers.

“We have deep concerns about the unrestrained and apparently unending willingness of Albany Democrats to provide billions of dollars in government giveaways including, for example, free housing and food, health care, and countless other social services and legal services to the illegal migrants pouring into New York. It’s out of control. Where does it end? New York State taxpayers, many of whom face extreme hardship making their own ends meet, cannot keep footing the bill for what appears to be a bottomless, exploding Albany Democrat bureaucracy of entitlement that New York State government is fast becoming.”

O'Mara, in his role as the top Republican member on the Finance Committee, said that Senate Republicans will continue to be a voice for affordability, lower taxes, less regulation, economic growth, job creation, and more common sense on state fiscal practices.

Watch Senator O'Mara's comments on the floor of the Senate today during debate over the one-house budget [HERE](#).