



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Passes FY2024-2025 State Budget as “Prudent Investments for Today and Tomorrow”

PETE HARCKHAM April 22, 2024

| ISSUE: **SENATOR HARCKHAM. SD40, 2024-2025 STATE BUDGET, EDUCATION AID, CLEAN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, 2024-25 STATE BUDGET; LOCAL ROADS AND BRIDGES; CHIPS**



State Sen. Pete Harckham during debate on the FY2024-2025 State Budget

Fiscal plan maintains funding for education and road repairs while supporting clean water infrastructure—with no tax increases

Albany, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham, along with his colleagues in the State Legislature, passed the FY2024-2025 State Budget today. Included in the fiscal plan are

funding initiatives that restore funding for education and road repairs while supporting clean water infrastructure projects—with no new tax increases and a continuance of the middle-class tax cut. The budget also focuses on issues like public safety, affordability and climate change.

“The best way to ensure New Yorkers have an opportunity to prosper and make progress in their lives is by enacting a State Budget that addresses their needs while strengthening our communities statewide—and that’s what we’ve accomplished here,” said Harckham. “This year, it was important to make prudent investments for today and tomorrow that will help children succeed in school, keep our roadways as safe as possible and protect our environment. Additionally, these investments and policies address concerns residents have regarding affordability and public safety.”

Harckham added, “These investments, substantial as they are, are possible even as the budget delivers **the lowest personal income tax rate for residents in over 70 years for New York’s middle class**, which the state began to phase in six years ago. These tax savings simply mean New York’s hard-working families keep more of what they earn.”

The total spending for the FY2024-2025 State Budget is roughly \$237 billion, \$4 billion over the Executive Proposed Budget.

Many of the initiatives in the new budget will have a strong and positive impact on the 40th Senate District (SD40), particularly in public safety, veterans, domestic violence and job creation.

EDUCATION

- Total amount of school aid statewide is \$35.9 billion, up from \$34.5 billion last year and a record high, reflecting the State Senate’s rejection of the Executive’s proposed elimination

of “Hold Harmless”

- Total amount of school aid in SD40 is \$543,934,780, up \$17.260,000 (3.28%) from last year
- A Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award increase—the first since 2000—from \$500 to \$1,000 and expanded eligibility

“Our commitment to education in New York is an investment in the future health and well-being of more than our students—it supports our communities and our economy,” said Harckham. “Increasing state aid to local schools, helping to ensure a quality education regardless of zip code, benefits all of us, and I thank my colleague Sen. Shelley Mayer, chair of the Senate Education Committee, for her tireless work on behalf of the state’s students and educators.”

Since Hackham has been in office (2019), state aid to SD40 schools has increased \$208 million cumulatively.

Karen Belanger, executive director of the Westchester Putnam School Board Association, said, “We applaud the efforts of the New York State Legislature in ensuring that public school districts will not see a reduction in Foundation Aid in the coming year. Thanks in large part to our local state senators and assemblymembers who prioritized education, local districts and communities are breathing a sigh of relief that projected cuts in programming and services may not be required. We appreciate the inclusion of a study to look at the Foundation Aid formula, and hope for an open and robust process that provides school districts with the ability to plan for future years and acknowledge the growing needs of students.”

Carol DeGeorge, president of the Bedford Teachers’ Association, said “We want to thank our elected officials and all community members who advocated to ensure Bedford schools would not be harmed in this year’s state budget. It is critical for the future of the district that the state upholds its promise to fully fund Foundation Aid. The potential loss in programs,

clubs, music, art, and support for students would have been catastrophic if the cuts in state funding that were initially proposed went through. Thank you to Senator Harckham and Assemblymember Burdick for being our champions in Albany for Bedford schools."

TRANSPORTATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Consolidated Local Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) for a total of \$598.1 million—all cuts in the Executive's budget restored
- \$100 million in CHIPS for local roadways
- \$2.6 billion contribution into the \$32.9 billion five-year DOT Capital Plan
- \$7.9 billion in operating aid for the MTA
- \$333 million for upstate transit systems
- \$551 million for non-MTA downstate systems, a 5.4 percent increase in funding
- \$50 million increase in Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM), including a \$362K increase in SD40 to a total of \$4.08 million, a 9.75% increase from the previous year.

"These investments in our roadways and public transportation prioritize the safety of commuters and residents statewide, as well as keep our avenues of commerce open for the delivery of goods and services," said Harckham. "In the years going forward, it is critical that our commitments to transportation and local municipalities include increased funding, as much of our critical infrastructure is aging and will need to be carefully monitored."

Peekskill Mayor Vivian McKenzie said, "Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program and Aid and Incentives for Municipalities funding are essential for local governments. The \$100 million in CHIPS and \$715 million in AIM funding and \$50 million in temporary aid assistance in the enacted state budget will help local governments maintain critical infrastructure and key services while minimizing the tax burden on local property

taxpayers. Thank you to Sen. Harckham for advocating for our local communities.”

McKenzie added, “In these uncertain and inflationary times, it is so important that New York State partners with local governments to assist in providing pavement and service support. I applaud this budget for not missing crucial funding for pavement and municipal aid. It is particularly good to see municipal aid increased after so many years of staying flat. Peekskill appreciates this budget because it truly supports New York State local government.”

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE

- Restored clean water infrastructure funding to \$500 million
- Includes \$400 million for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)
- Rejects the Executive proposal to redirect \$25 million from the EPF toward personnel costs
- \$7.5 million for the Hudson River Estuary Management Program
- Creates an office for electric school buses through NYSERDA

“New York will continue to lead the nation in terms of protecting the environment and fighting climate change in the new state budget, which contains important funding for infrastructure to deliver drinking water to our communities,” said Harckham. “There is more work to be done, and we simply cannot wait to make the necessary investments that will lead to a cleaner, more sustainable future for all of us.”

Tracy Brown, president of Riverkeeper, said, “New York State's budget reaffirms our commitment to restoring the Hudson River and addressing our deteriorating water infrastructure. Continued funding for the Environmental Protection Fund and the Clean Water Infrastructure Act will furnish vital resources to meet the clean water needs of communities statewide. We are particularly pleased to see the restoration of funding levels

for the Hudson River Estuary Program and investments in programs like the SWIM initiative, which can increase access to clean and healthy water in the Hudson River and beyond. We are grateful to our elected officials and partners who work closely with us to champion these ongoing investments in clean water and New York's environment.”

PUBLIC SAFETY

- \$3 million for Westchester County Parkway police initiative
- \$35 million in Securing Communities Against Hate grants to protect houses of worship
- \$347 million to reduce and prevent gun violence
- \$35.7 million to prevent and prosecute crimes of domestic violence
- \$19 million for mental health services for school-aged children
- \$40.2 million for retail theft enforcement, plus increased penalties for offenders who assault retail workers

“Our communities deserve the utmost support for their public safety professionals and programs,” said Harckham. “Protecting our residents day and night is perhaps the most important aspect of responsible governance, and the investments we make along these lines in this budget are key to upholding the law and fighting crime.”

HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE TENANT PROTECTIONS

- \$150 million for New York Housing for the Future Homeownership and rental Housing Programs
- \$40 million restored for the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP) to continue providing outreach and legal services to individuals at risk of foreclosure
- \$500 million to develop 15,000 new housing units statewide

- Tax incentives for building new affordable housing and for projects already in the pipeline
- Good Cause eviction protections, and a new law to protect tenants from price gouging

“Helping homeowners and tenants stay in their homes is essential to maintaining the vibrancy and health of our communities while bolstering small business owners on Main Street,” said Harckham.

The adopted budget’s housing package includes two key planks proposed by Harckham: an incentive program for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and an opt-in program for commercial conversions outside of New York City. Both measures are badly needed at a time when delinquency rates for office buildings are skyrocketing, New Yorkers are facing historic housing costs and the Comptroller recently reported that more than half of New York’s renters were rent burdened.

Local governments will have the option of offering tax exemptions for the redevelopment of underused commercial properties into affordable rental housing. Municipalities will also be prioritized in state grant programs if they allow homeowners to build accessory apartments on their property.

Shirley Aldebol, Hudson Valley vice president of 32BJ / SEIU, said, “New York is facing an acute housing crisis. We need to protect tenants and increase housing supply. Facilitating the conversion of underused office space into desperately needed homes for New Yorkers is critical. The adopted state budget takes immediate action to address our limited housing supply, rising rents and tenant evictions with concrete public policy.”

HUMAN SERVICES

- 2.84% COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) increase for human service workers

- \$1.78 billion for New York State Child Care block grants—an increase of \$754.4 million from last year
- \$280 million in Workforce Retention grants for child care providers

“This new budget acknowledges the challenges we are facing, and the importance of safeguarding our residents as they seek opportunities to better their lives,” said Harckham. “New York State continues to prepare itself for the years ahead by making smart investments and looking for ways to support our residents and business owners.”