



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham, Senate Pass One-House Budget Resolution for FY2025-2026

PETE HARCKHAM March 14, 2025

| ISSUE: **SENATOR HARCKHAM. SD40, 2025 SENATE ONE-HOUSE BUDGET RESOLUTION, AFFORDABILITY. ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION AID**



State Sen. Harckham on Senate floor in Albany

Includes key Harckham initiatives to support families, seniors, safe roads, utility relief, and climate protection

*Albany, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham, along with his colleagues in the Senate, passed the one-house budget resolution today. The resolution is designed to provide

essential support for New Yorkers in a time of rising costs and make crucial investments in standards in education, public safety, transportation and environmental protection.

“The Senate’s one-house budget resolution represents a significant investment in New Yorkers and our communities,” said Harckham. “At a time when prices are surging across the board, it is crucial that New Yorkers know their state government is fully behind them. This budget will allow us to combat the rising cost of living and make New York more affordable while improving our roadways, supporting families and seniors, lowering utility costs that have become unmanageable, safeguarding our environment, and combatting climate change.”

A number of initiatives in the one-house resolution stem directly from legislation introduced by Harckham, particularly in regard to environmental and climate initiatives. These include the enacting the Climate Resilient New York Act which creates the Office of Resilience to coordinate and streamline the state’s response to climate threats, establishing a floating solar incentive and education program to assist municipalities in taking advantage of underutilized waterways to meet their energy needs, doubling the Residential Solar Tax Credit to make household solar more accessible and creating a \$2,000 rebate for used zero-emissions vehicles to increase access to clean transportation.

Additionally, the budget includes several provisions reflecting Harckham’s advocacy, such as an additional \$100 million for the New York State Department of Transportation’s Region 8 (Mid-Hudson Valley) to enhance local roads and bridges and a \$200 million increase in clean water funding to replace lead service lines and upgrade municipal water infrastructure—issues on which Senator Harckham has been a steadfast leader.

Some highlights of the Senate one-house budget resolution, by category:

## **Making New York More Affordable**

- Expanded the Working Families Tax Credit to make more residents eligible for full benefits
  - Provides up to \$1,600 per child credit for eligible families
  - Paid in quarterly installments to offer financial support throughout the year
  - Indexed to inflation to ensure it remains effective over time
- Significantly expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit to maximize savings for working New Yorkers
  - Lowered the eligibility age from 25 to 19 to ensure younger New Yorkers can take advantage of this program
  - Increased the total credit to help middle to low income New Yorkers cover essential costs like rent, groceries and healthcare
- \$877.8 million in New York State Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM) to support municipalities and help moderate property taxes

## **Assisting Seniors**

- Modifies the inflation rebate check to focus on assisting our seniors and extends the program for an additional three years
- Increases the earnings cap for public service retirees from \$35,000 to 65,000

## **Improving Access to Child Care**

- \$500 million for a Child Care Workforce Stabilization fund to get more childcare workers into the field, leading to more slots for working families

- \$25 million for expanding non-traditional-hour childcare, helping working families

### **Assisting Residents with Utilities**

- Adds \$200 million to support Energy Affordability Program to lower utility bills for low income households
- Creates the Green Affordable Pre-electrification Program (GAP), helping homeowners and tenants upgrade properties for energy efficiency and climate resilience

### **Transportation**

- Invests \$2.3 billion investments to improve roads, bridges, and public transportation, supporting economic growth and job creation,
- \$100 million increase for NYSDOT Region 8 to compensate for past underfunding.
- \$100 million in additional support for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) to assist municipalities
- \$50 million in additional support for Extreme Winter Recovery, for a total of \$200 million
- \$82 million for non-MTA transit systems, ensuring critical suburban and upstate transit agencies receive adequate operational funding

### **Environment and Climate Goals**

- Adds \$200 million to Clean Water Infrastructure Funding for a total of \$700 million with \$100 million each devoted to lead service line replacements and the Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program;
- \$100 million increase to the Environmental Protection Fund

- Creates a \$2,000 rebate for used zero-emissions vehicles to make clean transportation more accessible
- Doubles the Residential Solar Tax Credit from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (Harckham)
- Creates a new Floating Solar Incentive and Education Program to support municipal and private solar energy expansion
- Enacts the Climate Resilient New York Act creating the Office of Resilience to coordinate State responses to climate threats
- Calls on the Governor to finalize a cap-and-invest program as outlined by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

## **Education**

- \$680 million increase in Foundation Aid, by increasing the regional cost index in the Hudson Valley to ensure all schools get at least a 3% increase
- \$180 million for after-school programming (LEAP grants) to expand learning opportunities statewide
- \$150 million for Universal Pre-K expansion, continuing the Senate's commitment to

early childhood education.

**Stephen Papas, President & CEO of the United Way of Rockland County**, said, "Senator Harckham and Senate leadership know every family deserves financial stability and a fair shot at success, which is demonstrated by their support of the Working Families Tax Credit. This tax credit is vital to supporting hardworking families by helping them keep more of their earnings to build a brighter future. Investing in families strengthens our communities and creates opportunities for all."

**Vivian McKenzie, Mayor of the City of Peekskill**, said, “In these challenging times, it's reassuring to know that New York State stands with our municipalities. We are grateful for the continued support through AIM funding.

**Chief Thomas Howley of the North Salem Police Department** said, “The North Salem Police Department greatly appreciates the Senate’s proposal to increase the amount of money a retiree can make. This will help with Public Safety not only in the Town of North Salem but all over New York State. Unfortunately, \$35,000 doesn’t go as far as it did in 2019 when the last increase was passed. It will allow more New Yorkers to remain living in this great state. Thank You Senator Harckham.”

**James Martorano, a Yorktown senior**, said, “In these troubling times when seniors like myself are worried about cuts to social security and Medicare benefits. Getting good news like this from Senator Harckham is a relief. It is reassuring to have public servants like Senator Harckham fighting for senior citizens”

**Dawn Meyerski, Executive Director of the Mount Kisco Child Care Center** said, “I see firsthand the impact of inadequate wages on our workforce. The challenge of hiring and retaining staff is resulting in empty classrooms and long waiting lists. The financial burden of fair wages for childcare staff has fallen disproportionately on parents who cannot afford tuition increases to adequately compensate teachers. We are grateful for the NY State Senate’s commitment of \$500 million to make childcare affordable and accessible to all working families in the state. This funding works to create safe places for children as well as strong and vibrant communities.”

**Laurie Wheelock, Executive Director of the Public Utility Law Project** said, “PULP thanks Senator Harckham for his leadership in championing energy affordability in the Senate’s one-house budget. The \$200 million investment in the Energy Affordability Program and \$50

million for the HEAP Cooling Program will provide much-needed relief to low-income households struggling with high utility costs. PULP commends Senator Harckham's commitment to prioritizing these essential programs and his unwavering support for New York's utility consumers."

**John T. Cooney, Jr., Executive Director of the Construction Industry Council of Westchester and Hudson Valley, Inc.**, "The Construction Industry Council of Westchester and Hudson Valley Inc. thanks Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Pete Harckham, and the NYS Senate Majority for their one-house budget proposal. The \$100 million included for Region 8 is a vital investment for the Hudson Valley, where Senator Harckham has long advocated for more road and bridge funding. This increased support helps restore the purchasing power of NYS DOT and local communities, addressing the impact of rising construction material costs. The Construction Industry Council and our labor partners thank Senator Harckham for his efforts and for securing funding that will put local companies and workers to work improving New York's infrastructure."

**Nick Durante, Supervisor of the Town of Southeast**, said, "As Supervisor of Southeast, I cannot stress enough the importance of Chips funding for us. I know Senator Harckham has been working diligently to secure these funds, and learning that the funding will be increased is excellent news for our residents. Thank you."

**Jeremy Cherson, Associate Director of Government Affairs for Riverkeeper**, said "The Senate One House Budget delivers a major victory for the Hudson with a \$2 million increase for Hudson River funding and a much needed boost to clean water infrastructure projects," said Jeremy Cherson, Associate Director of Government Affairs for Riverkeeper. "Made possible by a \$100 million increase to the Environmental Protection Fund and coupled with the proposed \$700 million investment in clean water infrastructure funding, the proposal will drive real action to protect water quality, restore habitats, and strengthen the resilience of the Hudson for

generations to come. We applaud Senator Harckham for securing this funding and are grateful to have strong champions for the Hudson River in the Senate."

**Leo Wiegman, Director of Solar Programs for Sustainable Westchester** said, "Floating solar has tremendous potential on non-recreational water bodies, such as active or former reservoirs. Local governments can use such sites as community solar projects to benefit local residents with guaranteed savings or to offset municipal electric costs. I'm delighted to see New York State take the lead on this opportunity."

**Melinda Person, NYSUT President**, said, "The Senate's proposal affirms a commitment to public education as the foundation for New York state's future. By expanding funding for universal pre-K and community schools, it acknowledges that supporting students should start early and extend beyond the traditional classroom. By boosting funding for SUNY, CUNY, community colleges and SUNY hospitals, it demonstrates the urgent need to fund public institutions of higher education with resources not just to survive, but to flourish. The senate's proposal also underscores the hard work educators do with a new educator tax credit for the money they spend out of pocket on school supplies and by investing in professional development through teacher centers. We will continue to work with legislators across the state and across the aisle on protecting kids' mental health through distraction-free learning and enact a budget that supports public schools as the centers of our communities."