



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera Issues Statement Regarding the Senate's Passing of the 2011-2012 Budget

GUSTAVO RIVERA March 31, 2011

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New York, NY – Senator Gustavo Rivera (D, WF-Bronx) joined his colleagues in the State Senate last night in voting on the 2011-2012 Budget. Senator Rivera issued the following statement regarding the budget:

“I congratulate Governor Cuomo for his commitment to passing an on-time budget. During this budget process, there were a number of concerns I felt needed to be addressed, among them the restoration of funding for critical services such as funding for education, for SUNY and CUNY, summer school programs as well as Title XX funding for seniors. I was also vocal about the importance of extending the personal income tax for the wealthiest New Yorkers and the inclusion of stronger rent laws in the budget. I am pleased to report that funding allocated to education, SUNY and CUNY, summer school programs and Title XX funding was restored in the final budget and that the four senior centers that would have been in danger of closure in my district do not have to worry about losing this important revenue stream.

Unfortunately, the other concerns I enumerated were not addressed during the budget process. Consequently, I am concerned that the impact of budget cuts, particularly in the area of education, will place a disproportionate burden on low-income communities, middle class families and communities of color like the ones I represent. While I believe Albany and

our state government working in a timely and effective manner is critical and should be celebrated, I am concerned that aspects of the budget that was just passed in Senate do not reflect the values of shared sacrifice and shared responsibility I believe are critical to putting together a fair budget during tough economic times.

While sizable cuts for education funding and social services were made in the budget, there was legislation that provided a significant tax cut for wealthy New Yorkers by not extending current personal income tax rates. For that reason, I could not vote in favor of each of the budget bills.

However, I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure the extension of the personal income tax for wealthy New Yorkers, which is currently scheduled to expire at the end of 2011. Additionally, I am confident that with the support of our Governor, we will be able to pass legislation to not only extend, but strengthen, current rent regulation laws due to expire in June of this year.”

The 2011-2012 Budget was divided into 11 bills, two of which Senator Rivera voted against. The final bill was passed right before midnight on March 30, 2011, making the passing of State Senate budget early.