



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera Votes No, Speaks to Missed Opportunities In the Budget

GUSTAVO RIVERA March 30, 2012

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**

Bronx, NY – Senator Gustavo Rivera (D,WF-Bronx) voted today on 7 of 11 budget bills, voting NO on S. 6254D (Capital Funds), S.6250D (State Operations) and S.6256D (Health and Mental Hygiene). Prior to today, the State Senate had voted on 4 of the 11 budget bills, all of which Senator Rivera supported on the floor of the Senate.

Senator Rivera speaks on S.5254D (Capital Funds bill):

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n\\_YFMt7BoBw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_YFMt7BoBw)

Senator Rivera speaks on S.6253E (Aid to Localities bill):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkQ6206AL2A>

“Today the legislature missed several opportunities to improve the lives of working families by not creating a New York State Health Insurance Exchange, not allocating dedicated

funding for the new Tenants Protection Unit within the Department of Housing and Community Renewal and by failing to fund the MTA Capital Plan at the levels necessary to avoid a fare hike next year,” said Senator Rivera. “I voted in support of the Aid to Localities budget bill, which included the restoration of funding for Neighborhood Preservation Program that supports organizations like the West Bronx Housing Resource Center and Fordham Bedford Housing. I was also pleased that the Aid to Localities budget bill took several important steps forward to increase funding for our community colleges, for domestic violence programs and for the creation of the Office of New Americans, which will work to engage legal permanent residents and increase access to English Language education services and citizenship services.”

“I also want to credit the students, families, teachers and education advocates who came to Albany to express their outrage that \$250 million would be allocated to competitive grants, instead of to the neediest schools in our state. Thanks in large part to their advocacy, only \$50 million was finally allocated to competitive grants, while \$200 million went to state aid.”

State Senate Democrats proposed a total of 7 amendments to the budget, all of which Senator Rivera supports. However, each time an amendment was introduced, Senate Republicans refused to allow the amendments to come to a vote. The amendments included votes on whether to include the following bills in the State Budget:

- Funding for a Study on the Seismic Impact of Hydrofracking
- Inclusion of the New York State DREAM Act

- Increasing CUNY Foundation Aid
- Creation of a Small Business Revolving Loan Fund
- Creation of the New York State Health Insurance Exchange
- Providing Medicaid relief for localities
- Creation of Senior STAR Property tax Rebate for senior homeowners