



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

## Governor Cuomo Announces Bold Agenda for 2013

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY January 8, 2013

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo delivered his 2013 State of the State Address, outlining a comprehensive agenda that builds on the progress of the past two years to attract good jobs and economic growth, create a world-class education system that prepares the next generation for the future, maintain fiscal integrity and discipline, and continue to restore New York as the progressive capital of the nation.

"New York is on its way, coming back stronger than ever before, rising to meet some of the biggest challenges in our history, remaining as a progressive beacon of light to the rest of the nation, and standing out as a model of effective government," Governor Cuomo said. "Gone are the anti-business, obstructionist, tax capital, and gridlock mentalities, replaced with an entrepreneurial government that collaboratively works together for the people and partners with the private sector to create jobs and get the economy back on track. The agenda laid out today is a comprehensive plan for New York State to rise to meet the challenges of today and the future, from confronting the difficult issue of gun control, to reforming our education system for the 21st century, and rebuilding our communities and infrastructure after Hurricane Sandy. Our accomplishments over the past two years show us that one thing is clear: We can defy the odds and deny the naysayers, and we can accomplish anything together."

**Below is a summary of Governor Cuomo's proposed initiatives.**

## **Economic Development**

This year's economic development program will build upon the work of the Regional Economic Development Councils as well as partnerships with higher education, because New York's one-two punch is jobs and education.

Tech Transfer—from Academia to Commercialization: As many of the country's most significant high-tech economic clusters owe their success to technology transfer, the Governor proposed steps to accelerate the commercialization of good ideas and the creation of new businesses to take them to market. Steps include:

- Innovation Hot Spots: Ten higher education/private sector high-tech incubators will be selected as "Hot Spots" through a competitive process that fosters innovation by offering inventors and entrepreneurs support to grow their businesses and to be part of a tax-free zone, where start-ups will not be subject to business, real property, and sales taxes, to encourage business growth in New York State.
- Innovation NY Network: To break down barriers to commercialization of academic ideas, the Governor proposed creating the Innovation NY Network to build collaboration among academics, venture capitalists, business leaders, patent lawyers and other professionals and entrepreneurs to facilitate and grow the commercialization process.
- Innovation Venture Capital Fund: A \$50 million Innovation Venture Capital Fund will provide incentives for successful start-ups to stay in the state and grow. Support from the Innovation Venture Capital Fund will help these entrepreneurs make the transition from research and other ideas through prototyping and ultimately to the creation of marketable products.

- Reforming Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance for Businesses and Workers: To continue to lower the cost of doing business in New York and reduce the crushing burden of unemployment insurance and workers' compensation, the Governor proposed reforms to both systems that will save businesses \$1.3 billion, while also increasing unemployment insurance benefits to workers for the first time since 1999.
- Making New York the Leader in the Clean Tech Economy: To continue to establish New York as a national leader in building a clean tech economy program, the Governor announced the following steps:
  - NY Green Bank: The \$1 billion Green Bank will leverage public dollars with a private sector match to spur the clean economy.
  - Extend NY-Sun Solar Jobs: The program will be expanded at \$150 million annually for 10 years to increase solar panel installations for homes and businesses.
  - Charge NY Program: The Charge NY Program will invest in an electric car network to reduce reliance on fossil fuels by installing a statewide network of charging stations and providing charging infrastructure tax credits.
  - Cabinet-Level Energy Czar: To coordinate the state's clean-tech agenda and oversee the state government's energy portfolio, the Governor has named Richard Kauffman, a senior advisor to the nation's Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, to serve as a member of the Cabinet as the "Energy Czar."
- Preparing the Workforce of Today and Tomorrow: To retool New York's workforce to be prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow, the Governor proposed steps to reimagine the SUNY and CUNY community colleges to ensure the state's job training programs produce the trained personnel that businesses need:

- Next Generation Job Linkage Program: The Governor outlined a Job Linkage Program that will link community colleges with employers to identify the job, to define the skill, and to provide the training for it. The state will pay for performance by funding colleges based on student job placement.

Market NY to Focus on Upstate Economic Development: The Governor today announced Market NY, a new multi-faceted marketing plan to bolster Upstate growth.

- Taste-NY: The Taste-NY initiative will coordinate around promoting New York products, including creating duty-free "Taste-NY" stores across the state to promote New York grown and produced products.

- \$5 Million Advertising Competition: A \$5 million advertising competition for the best regional marketing plans will be launched, incentivizing counties to work together to forge regional synergies.

- The Adirondack Challenge: Noting that New York has some of the best whitewater rafting in the nation, the Governor proposed a national whitewater rafting competition to be held in the North Country.

- Destination Resorts/Casino Gaming: To increase upstate tourism, the Governor proposed a casino gaming plan that would locate up to three casinos in Upstate New York. Under the proposal, casino gaming revenue will be split 90% for education and 10% for local property tax relief.

## **Education**

New York's economic recovery and future strength is dependent on a top-quality education system that prepares our students to succeed in the 21st century economy. While tremendous progress has been made over the last two years, there remains much more work

to be done to meet the educational needs of our children and prepare them for the future. Drawing on the work of the New NY Education Reform Commission, the Governor announced a comprehensive strategy to transform and modernize public education.

**More Learning Time:** Research shows that students who have more time to learn have higher academic achievement than their peers. This is apparent in schools across the country, where quality learning time has been successfully and creatively expanded, resulting in significant student performance gains, especially in low-income communities. To help close the achievement gap, the Governor announced steps for our students to spend more time learning.

- Extending the School Day and/or Year:** The Governor proposed a new competitive grant program for schools that develop initiatives to improve student achievement that include extending learning time by at least 25 percent and a high quality plan to achieve better outcomes for students.

- Full-Day Pre-Kindergarten for the Highest-Needs Students:** With decades of research showing that early childhood education has a major and long-lasting impact on a child's future success, the Governor announced plans for the state to invest in high quality, full-day pre-kindergarten, beginning with New York's highest-needs students.

- Better Teachers and Principals:** Research suggests that teachers account for one-third of a school's total impact on student achievement and that principal leadership accounts for 25 percent. The Governor announced that a district's school aid increase will continue to be contingent on local adoption of an appropriate teacher evaluation system agreed to by school districts and union leadership. In addition, the Governor today announced steps for the state to better recruit and retain the best and brightest to educate students, provide teachers and principals with the support they need to be successful, and continue to

recognize and reward successful educators throughout their career.

- Creating a "Bar Exam" for Teachers: To ensure that the best and the brightest are teaching our children, the Governor proposed increasing admission standards for entry into educator preparation programs, and implementing a "bar exam" that teachers must pass in order to receive certification.

- Incentivizing High Performing Teachers: High-performing "master teachers" will receive \$15,000 in supplemental income annually for four years to teach other teachers. These master teachers will enhance their own teaching methods and train other teachers to improve performance in the classroom.

- Education in Distressed Communities: Recognizing that the demands of schools in wealthier districts are different than those in lowest wealth districts, the Governor announced plans to improve education and the resources offered by schools in New York's neediest communities.

- Community Schools: In neighborhoods in some of New York's neediest areas, Community Schools – offering education plus health, employment, after school, and other support services – serve as the hub for all community services. The Governor proposed to replicate successful models such as Cincinnati Community Learning Centers, Harlem Children's Zone, Say Yes to Education, and Strive Network in distressed communities across New York State.

- Round 3 of NYSUNY2020 and a New NYCUNY2020: The NYSUNY2020 initiative has succeeded in leveraging the economic power of the State's university system as a private sector job generator. The Governor proposed a third round of NYSUNY2020 and a first round of NYCUNY2020 that will offer additional grants for 2- and 4-year colleges and universities within both the SUNY and CUNY systems. Projects will be selected in a competitive manner

based on economic impact, advancement of academic goals, innovation, and collaboration.

### **Progressive Agenda**

New York has a long history of being a beacon for progressive change, from the birthplace of the movement for women's rights, to worker protections, to decent, affordable housing, intelligent environmental protection and safe energy sources; and becoming the largest and most influential state to extend marriage equality to all its citizens. Yet there is much work to do, and this year's agenda calls for making the state a fairer, more just place for all residents, with a focus on expanding women's equality, ending racial injustice, and fighting poverty.

- Raising the Minimum Wage: A reasonable minimum wage increases the standard of living for workers, reduces poverty, incentivizes fair and more efficient business practices, and ensures that the most vulnerable members of the workforce can contribute to the economy. New York's current minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour is below that of 19 other states and prior adjustments have not kept up with increases in the cost of living. The Governor proposed to raise the minimum wage to \$8.75 an hour.

- Stop and Frisk: While stop and frisk can play an important role in the prevention of crime, there are also significant costs, including a deterioration of relationships between community residents and law enforcement, and the reality that stops fall disproportionately on communities of color and, in particular, on the young.

- Marijuana Possession: State law makes “open view” possession of 25 grams or less of marijuana a misdemeanor, while possession of the same amount of marijuana in the home is a violation—a non-criminal offense punishable by a fine. Police arrest 100 times more people for this offense and these arrests comprise the single largest category of arrests in New York City, accounting for 15 percent of all NYC arrests and 20 percent of NYC misdemeanors. The

effects of those arrests fall almost entirely on Black and Hispanic individuals—82 percent—and largely on the young: 52 percent are under 25 and 69 percent are under 30. The Governor announced plans to bring parity to the law and decriminalize public view with 15 grams or less.

- Ensuring Fairness in the Justice System: Mistaken eyewitness identifications contributed to approximately 75% of wrongful convictions overturned by DNA evidence. False confessions contributed to approximately 25% of wrongful convictions overturned by DNA evidence.

- Strengthening Eyewitness Identification: The use of blind or double-blind photo arrays can reduce the potential for the administrator of the array to inadvertently influence the witness. The Governor announced plans to introduce legislation to permit eyewitness photo identification to be introduced at trial only where a blind or double-blind identification procedure has been used.

- Recording Criminal Interrogations: In order to help prevent wrongful convictions based on false confessions, as well as to protect law enforcement from erroneous allegations of coercion, the Governor proposed requiring that interrogations of persons arrested for serious offenses such as homicide, kidnapping and certain sex offenses be recorded on video.

- Create the \$1 Billion House NY Program: For the past two years, the state has made major investments in the development of affordable housing across New York as both a source of economic and community development. The Governor today proposed the House NY program, consisting of \$1 billion to produce or preserve over 14,000 units of affordable housing over the next 5 years. As part of House NY, the state will invest in the most successful affordable housing programs to help meet unfulfilled housing need, as well as revitalize New York's Mitchell-Lama Affordable Housing Program to rehabilitate housing units that are suffering from deferred maintenance and other physical deficiencies.



•The REDC Opportunity Agenda to Revitalize Poor Communities: The REDC Opportunity Agenda will build on the success and expertise of the Regional Economic Development Councils to help overcome the challenges that prevent poor communities from fully participating in our state's economic revitalization. Each Regional Council will focus on one distressed community, identify strategies that will address the challenges of concentrated poverty, and then be able to competitively seek funding through a streamlined process.

•Achieving Equality for Women: New York has long served as a model for equality and fairness on several issues including women's rights. The Governor today announced plans to advance a 10-Point Women's Equality Act that will break down barriers that perpetuate discrimination and inequality based on gender. The Governor's 10-Point proposal will:

•Protect a Woman's Freedom of Choice by Enacting the Reproductive Health Act

•Achieve Pay Equity

•Stop Sexual Harassment in All Workplaces

•Allow for the Recovery of Attorneys' Fees in Employment and Credit and Lending Cases

•Strengthen Human Trafficking Laws

•End Family Status Discrimination

•Stop Source-of-Income Discrimination

•Stop Housing Discrimination for Victims of Domestic Violence

•Stop Pregnancy Discrimination Once and For All

•Protect Victims of Domestic Violence by Strengthening Order-of-Protection Laws

- Fighting Hunger in New York:** To combat hunger in New York State, Governor Cuomo announced that an anti-hunger task force will be launched to increase participation in federally-funded anti-hunger programs, increase the use of New York farm products and healthy foods in anti-hunger programs, and facilitate private-sector efforts in partnership with the government to meet the above goals.
- Creating “CORe” Neighborhoods:** In New York State, distress is concentrated in a small number of areas. For example, in a high-crime neighborhood within Rochester, a black man between the ages of 15 and 29 is 33 times more likely to be murdered than in the rest of the nation. In Newburgh, 37 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and two-thirds of residents have no more than a high school diploma. To confront this challenge, the Governor proposed the Community, Opportunity, Reinvestment (CORe) initiative to better align state support with local needs, while supporting successful community-based efforts, so that the state can do a better job allocating resources to make measurable and sustained progress in improving high-need communities.
- Focus on Public Health:** The best way to improve the health of New Yorkers and to lower health care costs is to avoid preventable illness. While New York already expends considerable resources to support a broad array of public health initiatives and is considered a leader in this effort, the state needs to update programs and policies to better respond to the emerging health care issues of an increasingly complex social dynamic.
- New York to Set the 'Gold Standard' for Patient Care:** At the Governor's direction, the state will work with hospitals this year to improve the quality and safety of care provided to patients at key stages of hospital admission, treatment, and discharge. On this front, sepsis is a huge problem; striking at least 750,000 people in the U.S. each year, it is the number one cause of death in U.S. hospitals, and kills as many Americans annually as heart attacks, and more than AIDS, prostate cancer, and breast cancer combined. The Governor announced

that New York will lead the nation by being the first state to require all hospitals to adopt best practices – including an innovative checklist modeled off a proposal by Harvard's Atul Gawande –for the early identification and treatment of sepsis.

### **Public Safety**

From an all-crimes DNA databank and one of the nation's toughest texting-while-driving laws, to crackdowns on child pornography, domestic violence, and cyberbullying, New York has been on the forefront of putting in place some of the strongest public safety laws in the nation. However, with the nation still reeling from the senseless massacre in Newtown, Connecticut and our State still mourning the loss of first responders in Webster's shooting tragedy, New York must say enough is enough to gun violence.

- Safe and Fair Gun Policy: There have been far too many lives claimed as a result of gun violence in recent years, from Columbine, to Virginia Tech, Aurora, Newtown, and Webster. New York once led the way: 'Sullivan's Law' of 1911 was the nation's first gun control law—a model law that required a permit for possession of a hand gun. The time has come to make New York safer and once again lead the way for other states to follow.

- We Must Pass the Toughest Assault Weapons Ban in the Country: New York's ban on assault weapons is so riddled with loopholes and so difficult to understand that it has become virtually unenforceable. While state law bans magazines with a capacity greater than ten rounds of ammunition, the law exempts magazines manufactured prior to 1994. Because magazines are not generally stamped with a serial number or other mark that would identify the date of manufacture, it is virtually impossible to determine whether a large capacity magazine was manufactured prior to 1994. In order to fix this problem, the Governor proposed tightening our assault weapons ban and eliminating large capacity magazines regardless of date of manufacture.

- Preventing Private Sales to Prohibited Persons: While New York mandates that individuals buying guns from dealers or at gun shows be checked to determine whether they have a criminal record, suffer from mental illness, or otherwise are in a category of persons prohibited from owning guns, no such checks are done when a gun is sold privately. The Governor announced that he will propose requiring that any sale in New York State between private parties be subject to the same background checks.

- Enhanced Penalties: To effectively deter the flow and use of illegal guns on our streets, the Governor announced that he will propose enhancing penalties for those who illegally buy guns, for those who use guns on school property, and for those who engage in violent and serious drug-related gang activity.

- Reporting by Mental Health Professionals: Governor Cuomo announced that he will propose measures to ensure that when a mental health professional determines that a firearm owner is likely to engage in conduct that would result in serious harm to self or others, that risk may be reported and the gun removed by law enforcement authorities.

- One State, One Standard: Currently, licenses for handguns are issued by the county in which the gun owner lives, many of which are valid for life. As a result, while certain checks are run at the time a license is issued, once a license is obtained, there is no subsequent check to determine whether the holder is still eligible to own a gun. The Governor announced that he will propose a single standard across the state to ensure that appropriate checks can be run to bar convicted felons and other prohibited people from possessing firearms.

- Combating Gun Violence in the State's Most Violent Neighborhoods: The state will continue to implement programs that successfully reduce gun violence in high-crime neighborhoods. Pilot programs currently under way that employ a series of actions, including law enforcement, community members and service providers delivering a message that conveys

facts about the consequences of further violence, have resulted in big reductions in gun violence over a short period of time.

- Staying Ahead of the Game on Dangerous Designer Synthetic Drugs:** To continue the state's work to keep designer drugs off the streets and out of the hands of our children, the Governor proposed plans to make designer drugs like bath salts and synthetic marijuana Schedule I drugs—on par with heroin, LSD, marijuana, and ecstasy. The Governor will propose legislation to criminalize the sale and possession of these substances, and ensure the laws provide flexibility to immediately tackle the next iteration of designer drugs.

- New York State Cyber Security Initiative:** There is no question that cyber attacks pose a serious risk to our state and nation. The Governor announced that the state will launch a Cyber Security Initiative that will include the creation of a new, first-in-the-nation facility that brings together monitoring of both the cyber and physical aspects of critical infrastructure in New York State.

### **Government Reform**

For government to function and be effective, it must have the trust of the people. The Governor today proposed a series of reforms to give New Yorkers a stronger voice in government and strengthen the state's democracy.

- Campaign Finance Reform:** Currently, New York has the highest contribution limits among states that limit them at all and the third lowest rate of participation in campaigns. To rebuild trust in government, the Governor today outlined a series of steps that will bring fairness and greater disclosure to the state's campaign finance laws.

- Disclose NY – The Nation's Most Aggressive Disclosure Law:** Current law requires disclosure every six months to a year or, in some cases, never. The laws should be amended so that any

and all covered contributions to a PAC, lobbying 501(c)(3), other 501(c) organization, political committee, or political party over \$500 will be disclosed within 48 hours, and within 24 hours near Election Day.

- Public Financing of State Elections: Without public financing, New York's political candidates rely on large donors far more than small contributors. The Governor proposed enacting public financing of elections based on the model in place in New York City.
- Lower Contribution Limits: For most offices, the State's contribution limits are substantially higher compared to other states, ensuring that large donors dominate major political campaigns. The Governor announced plans to lower New York State's contribution limits, with even lower limits for those candidates who receive the benefits of public matching financing.
- Early Voting Ensures Easy and Effective Voting: The Governor proposed that New York create an early voting system that is at least one week long, and includes the weekend before a scheduled Election Day. Early voting strengthens democracy by making it easier and more convenient to vote and promotes higher voter turnout. It also reduces long lines at polling sites and eases the administrative burden on Boards of Elections on Election Day.
- Make Our Ballots More Readable: State election laws require that all printed ballots contain numerous symbols, numbers, and bits of text that clutter the ballot and force election officials to use miniscule font sizes. These laws need to be reformed to make ballots more readable and more user-friendly.
- OPEN NY: To increase transparency, citizen engagement, and government performance, Governor Cuomo plans to launch OPEN NY, an easy, single-stop electronic portal to provide public access to statewide and agency-level data, reports, statistics, compilations and

information. This initiative will reap substantial benefits by making valuable government data available to researchers, innovators, and the public, leading to cost savings, improvements in government accountability and collaboration, and enhanced trust in government.

- Local Government Finance: The Governor proposed creating a Financial Restructuring Assistance Program to offer advice to all counties, cities, towns and villages to help restructure their finances. The program will be run by a joint Task Force made up of the Comptroller, Attorney General, Division of Budget, and private-sector restructuring consultants.

### **Responding to the Crisis**

In just two years, New Yorkers have witnessed firsthand the destructive force of three powerful storms that have crippled the state: Irene, Lee and most recently Sandy. Each has taken an immeasurable toll on communities. Precious lives have been lost, and homes and businesses destroyed. Extreme weather is the new normal. The Governor today outlined a series of proposals for the state to fortify and upgrade the systems that can paralyze us when they fail during an emergency, as well as act to tackle the reality of a changing climate. These proposals draw from the work of four commissions that the Governor announced in November: NYS Respond, NYS Ready, NYS 2100 and the Moreland Commission on utility storm preparedness and response.

- Lower the Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Cap: Nine states including New York participate in the CO<sub>2</sub> cap and trade program. The current cap is 165 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and is well above the current emissions level of 91 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. As CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have declined over 30% since the cap was established, the Governor proposed lowering the cap on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to a level that guarantees we will reduce emissions below current levels.

- Increase Alternative Local Renewable Power Sources: To reduce dependence on centralized power plants and avoid outages, the Governor proposed increasing the use of alternative local power (distributed generation of electricity) using renewable sources, natural gas, and energy storage.
- Ensure a Skilled Energy Workforce: To address a lack of young members of the workforce with skills in the energy sector, the Governor announced that the State will enhance efforts in workforce training by expanding energy career training and placement programs and promoting awareness of the need for skilled energy workers.
- Improve the Resilience of Our Buildings: The Governor proposed updating the State Building Code to promote smarter, resilient building performance, as well as increased survivability. These changes would impact new construction and major renovations to existing construction, and would take into account the impact on different geographies and building types and consider factors such as effectiveness for protecting health and safety, as well as cost.
- Provide Assistance to Property Owners to Mitigate or Sell Properties in Vulnerable Areas: The Governor announced that the state will use various strategies to assist home and business owners whose properties were damaged in Hurricane Sandy to mitigate for the future or, if they choose to do so, to sell their properties and relocate.
- Recreate NY-Smart Home: The Recreate NY-Smart Home program will provide critical financial assistance to property owners to mitigate their properties for future threats.
- Recreate NY-Home Buyout: This program will be designed for homeowners who want to relocate.



- Ensure that Healthcare Facilities are Resilient: The Governor proposed to update the Department of Health's review of applications for new and substantial expansion of hospitals and nursing homes to consider location and infrastructure vulnerabilities. Under the proposal, healthcare facility applicants would be required to address the risks associated with being in a vulnerable location.
- Harden our Infrastructure: The Governor outlined a series of proposals designed to harden New York's infrastructure to better withstand future major storms.
- Toward a More Resilient New York Harbor: To build a more resilient Harbor, a long-term strategy will need to be developed that includes conserving and rebuilding natural systems that were lost to centuries of man-made activity, plus the building of additional barriers where needed. The state will work with other government partners to timely complete a comprehensive engineering evaluation of proposals, including potential barrier systems.
- Harden the Subway System: Flood-proof subways and bus depots with vertical roll-down doors, vent closures, inflatable bladders, and upsized fixed pumps (with back-up power sources) are all options to harden New York's subway system.
- Harden our Fuel Delivery System: Redundancies must be built into the fuel system, and generators and pumping systems must be readily deployable. The Governor proposed that gas stations in strategic locations be required to have on-site back-up power capacity to protect New Yorkers from temporary disruptions in fuel supply.
- Harden our Utilities: The Public Service Commission will require utilities to submit detailed implementation plans to harden their facilities, including raising substation walls and elevating transformer installations.

- Strengthen Wastewater Infrastructure: Flooding and storm surges from Lee, Irene, and Sandy resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars of damage to waste water treatment plants and the release of hundreds of millions of gallons of raw and undertreated sewage. To prevent a repeat of this scenario in the short-term, the existing wastewater treatment plants need to be repaired and mitigated to withstand higher flood levels.

Redesign Our Power System: The electrical power grid and the structures that control it must undergo a fundamental redesign that improves performances and protects ratepayers.

- Strengthen Public Service Commission's Regulatory and Enforcement Oversight: Based on the Moreland Commission's recommendations, the Governor proposed giving the Public Service Commission the regulatory and enforcement teeth it needs to improve oversight and regulation of the state's utilities.

- Abolish the Long Island Power Authority: Hurricane Sandy revealed systemic flaws and weaknesses in LIPA's structure. As recommended by the Moreland Commission, the Governor proposed privatizing Long Island service which will be overseen by a newly empowered PSC. The new structure must protect ratepayers.

- Effective Emergency Response: Preparing for disasters and responding to emergency events requires collaboration and coordination among local, State and federal authorities; non-governmental organizations; and the private sector, as well as skilled first responders and a network of civilians ready to help their fellow citizens during an emergency.

- World-Class Emergency Response Network: The state will create uniform training and protocols for all emergency personnel, including a SUNY/CUNY program certificate for all emergency workers in the state.

- Specialized Training for the National Guard: To build on the vital role that the National Guard plays in emergency response, the Governor proposed providing additional specialized training in key emergency response areas like power restoration, search-and-rescue, heavy equipment operation, crowd management and public safety where the Guard's scale, skills and equipment can have a unique and powerful impact on restoring power faster, saving lives and other critical areas.
- Statewide Volunteer Network: To capitalize on New York's spirit of volunteerism, the Governor proposed creating a Statewide Volunteer Network to mobilize and organize volunteers based on their skills, interests and resources.
- Civilian Emergency Response Corps: To ensure that the necessary skills and expertise are available and can be mobilized to effectively support rapid restoration of essential services and infrastructure, the Governor proposed a Civilian Emergency Response Corps made up of technical and trades personnel—including electricians, pipefitters, line workers, landscapers, public works personnel, civil engineers and debris removal tradespeople—who can be trained, certified, credentialed and deployed to perform disaster response and recovery related tasks as part of a well-coordinated public/private-sector partnership.
- Private Sector Emergency Response Task Force: The Governor proposed creating a standing task force made up of chief logistics officers from key industry sectors that will create a plan in advance for the distribution of food, water and other supplies and execute the plan in a declared emergency.
- Citizen Education Campaign: The campaign would focus on preparing all New Yorkers as "in-house first responders."

- Ensure that Vulnerable Populations Can Receive Help in an Emergency: The use of voluntary and effective Vulnerable Population databases will be expanded so first responders, outreach workers, and healthcare and human services personnel can find and serve those who may need assistance before, during, and after emergencies, including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, infants and children, and people with chronic medical conditions.

- Communicating with New Yorkers in an Emergency: Cell phone networks and other communications systems must be strengthened to ensure that first responders and citizens never lose the ability to communicate fully and instantly. In addition, New York will develop a program to allow mass text messages to be sent to all wireless phones in a chosen geographic area. In addition, the State will explore establishing a one-stop disaster recovery communications hub that is integrated with social networking, mobile messaging and chat tools—using all available means to reach New Yorkers.

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