



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

Zeldin Announces Passage of 2013-14 State Budget

LEE M. ZELDIN March 27, 2013

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**

 2013-2014 NEW YORK
STATE BUDGET

  

HELPING FAMILIES... CREATING JOBS... CUTTING TAXES.

Final Agreement Includes Important Initiatives For 3rd Senate District

Senator Lee M. Zeldin (R-C-I, Shirley) today announced that several key initiatives for which he fought to provide tax relief and protect vital programs and services have been included in the 2013-14 New York State Budget.

“This is the third year in a row that the state budget has been passed on time, and this year’s budget reflects the earliest date a state budget has been passed in more than 30 years,” said Senator Zeldin. “Considering the state’s history of late budgets, this is an important new standard.

“I am very pleased that several of my top priorities were included in the final state budget, including tax relief measures, increased aid to our schools and local governments, and the continuation of important programs to help our communities.”

Some of the most important tax relief and job creation initiatives include:

- \$800 million in business tax relief over three years to help businesses create new jobs, including a tax credit for any business that hires a returning veteran;
- Another \$300 million in STAR property tax relief over the next two years to give homeowners increased savings on their property taxes;
- Extension of the middle income tax cuts enacted in 2011;
- The reduction and elimination of the 18-a energy tax surcharge on utility bills to provide relief to businesses and ratepayers over the next 3 years;
- The Family Tax Relief Check to help middle income families with a total of \$405 million in tax relief;
- \$30 million restoration to the Office of People With Developmental Disabilities.

This year’s budget also increases school aid by \$942 million. Every school district in the 3rd Senate District will receive an increase.

“One of the most important highlights of this year’s school aid package includes restoration of the Governor’s proposed cut in High Tax Aid, which would have hit our local school districts especially hard,” said Senator Zeldin. “Restoring High Tax Aid provided the Sachem School District, for example, more than \$2 million in additional aid, and delivered hundreds of thousands in funding to the South Country, Sayville, Hauppauge, Connetquot and Bayport-Blue Point School Districts.

“The Governor’s original aid proposal also called for changes to the formulas that reimburse schools for building expenses, and these unexpected changes would have meant millions in extra costs. My Senate colleagues and I prevented the immediate implementation of these changes. This saved the taxpayers of the William Floyd School District, for example, approximately \$1.7 million.”

The budget also increased unrestricted revenue sharing aid for towns and villages. The Towns of Brookhaven and Islip will receive \$1.8 million each, and the villages of Bellport, Patchogue, Islandia and Mastic Beach will also be receiving aid.

"I am very thankful that we were able to allocate \$75,000 for the Village of Mastic Beach," said Senator Zeldin. "This is an important victory, considering the fact that the Village was only recently incorporated in 2010. It was especially important that we were able to deliver this funding to the Village as quickly as we did."

The budget also increases CHIPS funding by \$75 million, the first increase in 5 years, for local street and highway improvements, which will ease the fiscal pressure on local governments, including:

Village of Mastic Beach \$234,872

Village of Bellport \$17,000

Village of Islandia \$38,635

Village of Patchogue \$185,309

Town of Brookhaven \$3.4 million

Town of Islip \$2.2 million

"In the process of negotiating this budget, I was particularly sensitive to any new costs that may be imposed on local governments. I have long stated that if the State cannot fund it, we should not mandate it."

Senator Zeldin also built on budget victories he achieved during his first term. "One of the most fulfilling victories is the continuation and expansion of the PFC Joseph Dwyer PTSD Peer-to-Peer Veterans Counseling program," Senator Zeldin said. "At my request, the funding amount was increased from \$800,000 to \$2.3 million for this worthy program. In addition, it will now be expanded from four to eleven counties in the state. This innovative program will now be available to all veterans in Suffolk and Nassau Counties."

"A key priority on behalf of Long Island fishermen was the elimination of the Saltwater Fishing License Fee. Recreational fishing is a tremendous part of our local economy and local culture. Doing away with this fee is a big win for Long Island's saltwater fishermen," continued Senator Zeldin.

Also included in this year's budget are measures designed to avoid the long gas lines we experienced during Superstorm Sandy. Gas stations in New York City, Suffolk, Nassau,

Rockland, and Westchester Counties that are within ½ mile of a highway exit or hurricane evacuation route will be required to install a generator or be pre-wired to be prepared to install a generator within 24 hours of a declared fuel shortage emergency. The wiring must be installed by April 1, 2014. Federal grants will be provided up to \$10,000 for pre-wiring or \$13,000 for stations to pre-wire and install a generator. For those stations that pre-wire, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) will establish a pool of generators for them to rent during emergencies.

“There were many other notable aspects of this budget,” concluded Senator Zeldin. “As we move forward in this legislative session, I will continue to fight to protect the interests of my constituents and to strengthen the laws that protect all New Yorkers.”