



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Senator Kennedy Outlines State of the State Highlights for Western New York

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY January 8, 2014

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Senator Kennedy responds to Governor Cuomo's State of the State address, delivered Wednesday in Albany.

New investment to create jobs in Buffalo, initiatives to improve schools, property tax relief for homeowners are highlights for Kennedy.

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, outlined several highlights from Governor Andrew Cuomo’s State of the State address that will directly impact Western New York. Kennedy said the speech set the tone and the agenda for the upcoming legislative session, and he commended the Governor’s continued focus on Buffalo and Western New York.

The brightest of the highlights, Kennedy said, is the announcement of a new \$105 million genomic research center that will be established in Buffalo.

“This \$105 million genomic research facility will solidify Buffalo’s position at the cutting edge of biomedical research and discovery, and it will advance Buffalo’s reputation as a city on the move,” Kennedy said. “Our life sciences industry and Governor Cuomo’s Buffalo Billion have been key components fueling the economic resurgence of Western New York. With this announcement today, we again see the Buffalo Billion coming together with our thriving biomedical industry to create new jobs and spur the development of groundbreaking discoveries that will save lives.”

With many working families across Western New York struggling with property taxes, Kennedy highlighted new state proposals to reduce the tax burden on area homeowners. Kennedy also urged support for the Governor’s efforts to boost manufacturing in Upstate and Western New York.

“The targeted property tax relief for hardworking families will prove to be a much-needed lifeline for so many who are struggling to make ends meet. It will help strengthen middle-class homeowners by keeping more money in their pockets to make necessary purchases and allow them the flexibility to save for future expenses like their children’s education or their retirement. At the same time, by reducing taxes on manufacturers, especially those based in Upstate New York, we’ll help attract new companies and encourage existing businesses to

expand and create jobs. This will help grow the middle class by opening up new, good-paying career opportunities for New Yorkers looking for work.”

Senator Kennedy, who has long advocated for increased state aid and legislative reforms to strengthen schools, praised the new education initiatives that Governor Cuomo outlined in the State of the State. Kennedy said new state efforts to provide universal pre-kindergarten and new scholarships for the top 10 percent of high-school graduates to study STEM programs will help more New York students reach their fullest potentials. Kennedy also highlighted the Smart Schools Initiative which will allow school districts to upgrade technology to help students thrive. The Smart Schools initiative will be a \$2 billion bond referendum, which will provide school districts with resources to purchase necessary technology improvements.

“Our schools face many challenges, but challenges create great opportunities,” Kennedy said. “We have a responsibility to strengthen public education across this state and provide our educators and students all the resources they need to succeed. I’ll be fighting to make sure they have those necessary resources. In addition, the Smart Schools Initiative will help school districts across our state gain access to new technologies that will help our children achieve academic and career success.

“New York’s youngest and most vulnerable deserve equal access to educational opportunities, and by providing universal pre-kindergarten across our state, we will help millions of children reach their fullest potential,” Kennedy added. “New York State also has an obligation to help students access higher education, and we should encourage students to study the high-demand fields of science, math and technology. A new plan to provide high-achieving students with full scholarships to SUNY schools in exchange for a commitment to work in New York after graduation will provide students with new opportunities and help strengthen our workforce and our economy.”

Senator Kennedy also highlighted the extension of New York Youth Works, which is a targeted program to combat youth unemployment. The program has already put thousands of young New Yorkers to work, and with this extension, even more local youth will have the opportunity to secure good jobs and launch their careers with this innovative program.

For more on the State of the State, and to read the Governor's 2014 State of the State book, visit [this link](#).

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Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate's 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.