



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Highlights Budget Positives for New York's Seniors

CATHARINE YOUNG April 28, 2014

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THE 2014-2015 STATE BUDGET

A GOOD BUDGET FOR OUR SENIORS

Find out how New York State is helping those who've devoted their lives to building up our local communities and state.

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New State Budget Reflects Strong Commitment to Seniors

ALBANY - Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) highlighted a number of important initiatives included in the recently passed state budget that will help New York's seniors.

"Seniors in our state have spent their lives raising their families, enriching our communities, and working to power our state's economy. At the same time, they have saved for retirement and responsibly prepared for their golden years. Now, because of burdensome taxes and high costs of living, many retirees and seniors on fixed incomes are having difficulty staying in their homes here in New York after they've retired.

“For all they have done for us over the course of their lifetimes, we owe it to them to make sure they can retire securely and afford to stay here in New York. With this goal in mind, it was one of my highest priorities in this year’s state budget to make sure seniors were not forgotten, and I am happy to report good news for the millions of seniors throughout our state,” said Senator Young.

Included in the new budget are a number of positive initiatives, including expansion of the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program, tax relief for seniors, and investment in important programs that serve seniors.

EPIC Expansion

- The EPIC program that helps seniors afford their prescription drugs was increased by \$4.1 million and expanded by 10 percent. Up to 25,000 more seniors now will be eligible for relief because the income eligibility requirement was increased from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for single seniors, and from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for married seniors.

Tax Relief

- Of the record \$3.4 billion of funding for the STAR property tax relief program, \$905 million will go to the Enhanced STAR program that helps seniors afford their tax bills.
- Senior homeowners may also receive a property tax rebate as part of a new \$1.5 billion property tax freeze program that was passed. In school districts and municipalities that take, or have already taken, meaningful steps to reduce costs and increase efficiencies, a tax freeze will be applied to prevent an increase to the burden being shouldered by property owners.

Investing in Senior Initiatives

- The budget also increases support for a wide array of programs and initiatives that serve seniors, including:
 - \$5 million for the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) program, which provides transportation assistance, respite care, and meals-on-wheels to seniors.
 - \$875,000 for Elder Health/Alzheimer’s Programs.
 - \$200,000 for the Lifespan for Elderly Abuse Education and Outreach Program.

- \$86,000 for the New York Foundation for Seniors Home Sharing and Respite.
- \$31,500 for the Senior Action Council Hotline.

“Our seniors have done so much for us and continue to contribute in so many ways. We don’t want to lose them to other states. I will continue working on behalf of our seniors so they can live full, rich, and healthy lives right here in New York,” said Senator Young.

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