



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

## Funke Delivers for Monroe and Ontario Counties in Senate Budget

RICH FUNKE March 12, 2015

| ISSUE: **BUDGET**

**VIDEO:** <http://youtu.be/SGgpuwajVzE>

*Senator secures job creation, tax relief & education priorities in One-House proposal*

Senator **Rich Funke** today voted to pass the New York State Senate's One-House Budget proposal, which delivers on many of the priorities he advocated for on behalf of the 55<sup>th</sup> District. In addition to important job creation, tax relief, and education funding measures, the Senate One-House also includes more than a dozen District-specific Budget items introduced by **Funke** to better serve the families of Monroe and Ontario counties.

*"I'm proud the Senate Budget delivers on many of my top priorities for Monroe and Ontario counties, including tax relief, job creation, and education funding," said **Funke**. "It also includes several items I went to bat for, like a new Energy Tax Cap, a technology internship program, Thruway toll exemptions for Upstate farmers, and restored funding for youth and senior services. Now it's time for all State lawmakers to work to find common ground so we can deliver an on-time budget."*

The Senate One-House Budget reflects **Funke's** priorities in the following areas:

### **Jobs & Economic Development:**

- € € € € Cuts taxes for small businesses by raising the income tax exemption threshold from 5% to 10%, saving nearly 500,000 small businesses approximately \$125 million this year alone.
- € € € € Reallocates \$1.5 billion from the proposed Upstate Revitalization Fund Competition to instead provide direct support for Upstate communities, including Monroe and Ontario counties.

- € € € € Includes an additional \$1.5 billion for vital road and bridge infrastructure projects, plus \$50 million more for local highway maintenance and improvements.

### **Controlling Taxes & Spending:**

- € € € € Provides an expanded property tax rebate program to include all STAR-eligible homeowners, extending more relief to overburdened taxpayers in the Rochester region.
- € € € € Proposes a constitutional amendment to cap State spending increases to no more than 2% per year, forcing Albany to live within its means the same way local taxpayers and families do.
- € € € € Makes the property tax cap permanent to limit further hikes, particularly for local homeowners who pay some of the highest property taxes compared to home values in the nation.

### **Education Funding & Reform:**

- € € € € De-links school aid from the Governor's education proposals, ensuring that funding for local schools won't be held hostage in the fight over reform.
- € € € € Fully eliminates the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), a budget gimmick that cost schools in Monroe and Ontario County a combined \$122,275,310 since 2009.
- € € € € Provides nearly \$1.9 billion in total education aid to support New York schools.

The Senate One-House Budget also includes more than a dozen District-specific items introduced by **Funke** to better serve the families of Monroe and Ontario counties. Examples include:

- € € € € Passes an Energy Tax Cap to curb runaway energy taxes on businesses by revoking the New York State Public Service Commission's authority to levy new taxes, fees, or surcharges.
- € € € € Implements a Technology Internship Program for College Students/Recent Graduates/Veterans to connect

them with growing small businesses in the high-tech sector.

- € € € € Expands the State's STEM Scholarship standards to make the independent private colleges who confer 54% of all STEM degrees in New York eligible to participate in the program.
- € € € € Provides new Thruway and bridge toll exemptions for Upstate farmers transporting goods to market to support the agriculture industry in Monroe and Ontario counties.
- € € € € Restores \$3 million in funding cut in the Executive Budget for the Cancer Services Programs (CSP) of New York, including support for the CSPs of Monroe and Ontario counties.
- € € € € Provides \$1 million for the implementation of the evidence-based YMCA Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) program. The 55<sup>th</sup> Senate District is home to six YMCA centers.
- € € € € Restores Elder Abuse Prevention funding to \$945,000 to help provide training, public awareness, and direct social work services for at-risk seniors.

###

**VIDEO:** <http://youtu.be/SGgpuwajVzE>