



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

## Executive Budget Proposal, Government Modernization

DAVID J. VALESKY January 24, 2014

Governor Cuomo released his Executive Budget proposal this week, and as he made clear, the difficult choices that we have had to make in recent years have erased a sizeable structural deficit and we are in a much better fiscal position. I share the Governor's broad priorities to address the property tax burden, increase education funding, and create a more business friendly environment. I am especially pleased with the Governor's focus on breaking the cycle of economic decline in Upstate New York.

In the coming weeks, I look forward to assessing the details of the budget proposal and discussing it with my constituents and colleagues in the Legislature with the goal of enacting an on-time, responsible budget that strategically invests in areas that will allow the state to reach its full potential. As always, your opinions are valuable—please let me know if there are provisions about which you feel strongly.

### **Funding for Transportation Enhancement Projects**

Three projects in Central New York will receive nearly \$2.6 million for pedestrian and multi-use pathways that encourage tourism and economic development opportunities. The funds are made available to the state through the Federal Highway Administration and are administered by the state Department of Transportation. The projects are:

- \$1,530,000 for Onondaga Lake Canalways Trail – State Fair Boulevard Extension, Onondaga County
- \$545,830 for Oneida Rail Trail: Wampsville/Oneida Connector, city of Oneida
- \$519,968 for South Peterboro Street Enhancement Project Phase 1, village of Canastota

### **Commission on Local Government Modernization**

A newly formed commission is launching a comprehensive study of government structure in Onondaga County in an effort to provide better services more efficiently to the community. The commission will be called ConsensusUs and will be led by Neil Murphy, former president of SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry; Catherine Richardson, an attorney with the firm Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC.; and former Congressman James Walsh.

I was pleased to work with my colleague Senator John DeFrancisco to secure a \$250,000 grant in support of this work, which will include a review of:

- the number and types of local government in Onondaga County and the costs associated with those governments.
- the nature and extent of services delivered by various types of local governments.
- opportunities and barriers to restructuring local government functions and services and the extent to which more efficient practices can improve the performance of local government and the delivery of public services.

To learn more about ConsensusUs visit [www.consensuscny.com](http://www.consensuscny.com).

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