



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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A LOOK AT NEW YORK'S NEW STATE BUDGET: SENATOR RITCHIE'S WEEKLY COLUMN

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A few short months ago, we set out to create a new spending plan for New York State that strengthens the middle class, grows our economy, creates brighter futures for students and increases—as well as improves—opportunities for people here in our region, and beyond.

I'm pleased to report that we succeeded in achieving those goals, and just last week finalized a new state spending plan that will help to improve Central and Northern New York, as well

as our entire state. Highlights of the new spending plan include:

Relief for overtaxed New Yorkers: As a result of the new state budget, millions of middle class New Yorkers will be eligible for a new tax cut that totals \$6.6 billion over the first four years and brings middle class income taxes down to the lowest rates since 1948. By 2025, when the tax cut is fully phased in, it will provide an average savings of \$700 per taxpayer, per year, for an annual total savings of \$4.2 billion.

Record support for schools: Students will benefit from a \$1.4 billion increase in school aid, including a record \$554 million in support for schools in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties. In addition, we also succeeded in eliminating the budget-cheating GEA gimmick, which has robbed students of opportunities since it was first enacted before I took office in 2010.

Unprecedented investments in agriculture: The new state budget recognizes the importance of our state's leading industry with a record \$44.1 million in funding for agriculture that will help farmers across New York continue to grow. While the Governor's original plan included \$12 million in cuts that were only partly restored by the Assembly, the Senate fought for full restoration of funding for programs and other efforts that are helping to ensure the continued success of agriculture in New York State.

Fair funding for Upstate roads and bridges: Also in the new state budget is fair and equitable funding for job-creating transportation infrastructure projects across the state, including \$438 million for the state's Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) that will help local governments move forward with important local highway, road and bridge repair projects.

These are just a few of the key investments made in the new state budget that will help our region—and all of New York State—continue to grow. For more details on the spending plan,

I invite you to visit my website, www.ritchie.nysenate.gov.