



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs Announces Approval of Senate Budget Plan

SENATOR JACOBS March 15, 2017

| ISSUE: **SENATE BUDGET RESOLUTION, EDUCATION FUNDING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SENIORS**

(Albany, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs (60th SD) said that the State Senate’s budget plan that was approved today is as noteworthy for what is not in it, as it is for the items that benefit Buffalo and Western New York.

“The Senate budget that I voted for today rejects hundreds of millions of dollars in new taxes and fee increases, sending a powerful message to the Governor that Western New York taxpayers need relief,” said Senator Jacobs. “Rejecting these increases does more than just protect hard working, over-burdened taxpayers. It also helps maintain and advance the economic recovery taking place in our region,” Jacobs added.

Noting that parity in the distribution of state resources was a primary objective of his going into the budget process, the Senator highlighted a few measures included in the one-house spending bill that benefit his district.

**Huntley Closure Mitigation Funding** – Successfully amended language to increase state aid to help offset the loss of \$6 million in local tax revenue due to the closure of the Huntley power station. The eligibility timeframe for receipt of this aid is also extended, providing more time to plan for the future of the site.

**Cashless Tolling at Grand Island Bridges** – Inclusion of language in budget resolutions supporting cashless tolling at Grand Island bridges. This opens the door for discussions with the Governor and thruway authority on methods of implementation.

**Buffalo Billion II** - \$500 million dollars to support a second phase of economic development stimulus spending for Buffalo and Western New York.

**Bringing Ridesharing to Buffalo & Western New York** – The Senate budget resolution provides ridesharing companies with the ability to expand operations outside of New York City and enable new jobs to be created by offering more safe, reliable transportation options to communities and visitors.

**Education Funding** - \$25.4 billion in total education spending, the largest commitment ever to public education. This includes a more than doubling of the total amount of unrestricted dollars that can be allocated to school districts in the 60th District.

**Water Quality Infrastructure Initiative** - \$8 billion statewide infrastructure program to ensure clean drinking water and protection of state waterways. Highlighted by a \$5 billion Clean Water Bond Act. This commitment is especially significant given Western New York's aging infrastructure and that 58 percent of sewage overflows statewide occur in Erie County.

**Local Roads & Bridges** – Helps local governments make necessary infrastructure improvements and create jobs with \$513 million for local street and highway projects, \$50 million for local bridge projects and an additional \$11.5 million to increase the reimbursement rate for cities maintaining state highways.

**Protecting Seniors** – Restores cuts made in comprehensive services to seniors, adds \$5 million to Community Services for the Elderly Program and dedicates \$10 million to establish a statewide central register for elder abuse.

**Fair Wages for Direct Care Professionals** - \$45 million annually to compensate direct care professionals who provide critical care and assistance to individuals with disabilities. Addresses salary gap and high turnover rates to ensure vulnerable citizens receive adequate care.

Budget negotiations will intensify over the next few weeks as the Governor and legislature seek compromises on a final budget that is scheduled to take effect April 1.

“I am very pleased with the one house version of the budget we approved today,” said Jacobs. “It addresses a number of critical needs in our community while fighting to protect taxpayers, two of my most important priorities as State Senator,” he concluded.