



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie: New Budget Delivers on Key Priorities, Rejects Higher Taxes

BRIAN DWYER March 31, 2018

| ISSUE: **2018-19 BUDGET, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**



State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing that the new State Budget rejects more than \$1 billion in higher taxes, while setting new funding records for schools, agriculture, libraries and other key priorities that help make our communities stronger.

“From record investments in education to unprecedented support for key industries—like

agriculture—the new state budget closes a deep deficit and still invests in the priorities that will help strengthen our economy and improve our communities without raising taxes,” said Senator Ritchie. “New York’s new spending plan helps to make our state a better place and creates more opportunity for today, and for the future.”

Highlights of the new budget include:

- Rejects over \$1 billion in higher taxes proposed by the Governor, including cuts to the STAR property tax relief program—and billions more in tax hikes sought by the Assembly;
- Preserves a scheduled 20 percent middle class income tax cut and prevents backdoor tax hikes on state returns triggered by changes to the federal tax code;
- Provides record funding for public schools, an average increase of about 6 percent for schools in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties;
- Creates a record \$34 million capital fund for critical construction and improvement projects, and delivers the first operating aid increase in three years for public libraries;
- Restores a 40 percent cut to agriculture—including millions of dollars in cuts sought by the Assembly—and provides funding for programs outlined in the Senate’s “Growing Strong” plan to expand markets for locally produced farm products, agriculture education and research, including \$11 million for programs that help the state’s struggling dairy industry.
- The Senate succeeded in providing another \$40 million, on top of last year’s funding, for property owners and communities still recovering from Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River flooding; and

- Provides funding to help protect Fort Drum and surrounding communities from federal budget cuts, and \$1 million for farmland preservation around the base perimeter.

More information about the new budget is available by clicking [here](#).