



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Recapping a Productive Legislative Session

PATRICK GALLIVAN June 28, 2018

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The official start of summer brought an end to the 2018 Legislative Session in Albany. Again, this year, I focused on several key areas; controlling the size and cost of government without compromising the needs of our communities; cutting taxes for hard working residents and businesses; and providing opportunities and security for our families. I am proud to report that we have made progress in all of these areas.

This year's State Budget protects and delivers on a landmark \$4.2 billion middle class income tax cut to help millions of families and thousands of small businesses across New York. It

also provides more than \$3.7 billion in property tax relief, including continuation of STAR and Enhanced STAR. For the eighth consecutive year, state spending stayed at or below two percent, saving an estimated \$52 billion, or more than \$8,000 per taxpayer, since 2010.

In addition to supporting small businesses, the budget also increases aid to agriculture, New York's number one industry. New investments in agriculture research, environmental stewardship and other programs will support the next generation of farmers, keep our families healthy and keep our economy thriving.

This year the Legislature also increased aid to education by nearly \$1-billion, providing a total of \$26 billion – the highest level in state history - to help ensure students and teachers have the resources they need to succeed. The budget also increases aid to libraries for both operations and capital improvements.

As part of the legislative process, we also made school safety a top priority. I sponsored a bill to close a loophole in education law by requiring private schools to follow the same rules as public schools when it comes to reporting child abuse. The legislation passed the Senate and Assembly and will now go to the governor. The Senate also passed a comprehensive school safety package that would ensure that every school district that wants a School Resource Officer could have one. While the Assembly failed to act on this legislation, I will continue to make it a priority.

The Legislature also took steps to crackdown on the truly heinous crime of sex trafficking and to combat the heroin and opioid crisis. Legislation designed to stop the sexual exploitation of children, make it easier to prosecute perpetrators and provide safe housing for victims is being sent to the Governor for final approval. The Senate also secured record funding to strengthen prevention, treatment, recovery and education services to help put an end to the opioid epidemic that has devastated too many families across New York.

Finally, the state is making major new investments in transportation and infrastructure. This year's budget includes a \$200 million increase in infrastructure funding for road and bridge projects that will create new jobs and drive economic activity.

Despite our accomplishments, there is more work to do. I am honored to be your voice in Albany and will continue the fight to make New York a better place to live, work and raise a family.