



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## Senator Rivera on the 2019-2020 New York State Budget

GUSTAVO RIVERA April 1, 2019

| ISSUE: **2019-20 BUDGET**

### **2019-2020 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

"In our first, on-time budget as the Senate Majority Conference, my colleagues and I worked diligently to deliver a progressive, forward-thinking, and fiscally responsible budget for all New Yorkers. This was not an easy process and the Senate faced steep fiscal challenges and unrelenting opposition from the Executive at every turn. In spite of these obstacles, the final result is a step in the right direction, but our work is certainly not done.

Under the leadership of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, this \$175.5 billion Budget, which holds our state's spending growth at 2 percent, makes historical progress by implementing critical policies that will transform our state into a more just and inclusive state for all New Yorkers regardless of their wealth or immigration status."

### **HEALTH**

"As Chair of the Health Committee, I strongly believe that quality health care is a basic human right that all New Yorkers must have access to. We worked to reflect those values in this budget by protecting essential funds for New Yorkers healthcare needs and our medical care providers. We prevented a \$1.1 billion cut in Medicaid funding that could have devastated our state's healthcare system, codified the Affordable Care Act and NY State of Health Marketplace, required insurance providers to cover in-vitro fertilization and fertility

preservation, and invested \$16 million to enhance safety net hospitals to provide care to those New Yorkers who are under insured and uninsured.

While there were a number of funding challenges in this year's health Budget, the Senate Democratic Conference worked to identify creative solutions to protect critical programs. We pushed to create a work group that will determine the best way forward for our state to restructure the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP), while protecting the population this program serves. The budget also mitigates a \$122 million cut to nursing homes by creating a work group to ensure that the rates nursing homes receive accurately reflect their patient's needs.

The Budget also invests in improving public health initiatives, including allocating \$4 million for the newly created maternity mortality review board to reduce the alarming rates of maternal deaths during childbirth, and by lowering the threshold for elevated blood lead level from 10 to 5 micrograms to protect children from dangers of lead exposure."

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**

"For years, the Senate Democratic Conference has fought to reform our state's broken criminal justice system, which has caused countless of New Yorkers to lose their livelihoods, dignity, and tragically their lives, in favor of perpetuating the criminalization of black and brown people. With this Budget, we are taking historical steps to ensure our criminal justice system is just for all New Yorkers by reforming our bail system, ensuring a speedy trial, and updating our discovery laws. Together, these measures will ensure New Yorkers going through our criminal justice system have the ability to adequately defend themselves in court and don't have to wither away in jail waiting for their trial because they are too poor or their court dates is endlessly delayed."

### **TRANSPORTATION**

"This Budget is finally making a real commitment to address the chronic infrastructure

issues facing our crumbling public transit system, including the New York City subways, the Long Island Railroad and Metro North. New York will be the first state in the nation to implement congestion pricing to reduce traffic, and protect our environment, all while generating an estimated \$15 billion for MTA improvements. We will also increase accountability and transparency of the MTA by requiring it to undergo an independent audit and efficiency review."

## **EDUCATION**

"We fought to increase education aid by over \$1 billion, with over 70 percent of the increased funding going to neediest districts. However, this is one of the areas where I strongly believe that we should have done more, including fulfilling our responsibility to comply with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity settlement our state owes to our historically underfunded schools, several of which are located in my district."

## **ELECTION AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

"We are finally working to increase voter turnout in New York State, which is why I am glad we are investing \$10 million to implement electronic voter registration. However, one of the most disappointing items in this budget was the creation of a bogus "fair election commission". If we are truly serious about getting money out of government, we must pass a clean bill that will implement campaign finance reform once and for all as New Yorkers are vehemently demanding."

## **BRONX**

"I am elated that this Budget secured funding for several initiatives that will have a direct and positive impact in the Bronx. For example, we provided funding for school-based health clinics, like the one at Community School 55. We also secured \$24 million for home health care providers, many that serve and are based in the Bronx, that had been left with

significant liabilities after the ICS/VNS merger."

VIDEO: [Senator Rivera Debating the 2019-2020 State Health and Mental Hygiene Budget](#)

VIDEO: [Senator Rivera on the 2019-2020 Revenue Budget Bill](#)

VIDEO: [Senator Rivera on the 2019-2020 Health Budget Bill](#)