



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo: 'Bare-bones' state budget must be done

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 24, 2020

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With the state facing a myriad of challenges related to COVID-19, New York State Senate Deputy Minority Leader Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, is urging Gov. Andrew Cuomo to exclude all policy that could be contentious or cause delay from this year's State Budget.

"While we remain cognizant of the serious public health crisis confronting our state, it is important that we also fulfill our budgetary obligations and meet the April 1 deadline," Deputy Minority Leader Griffo said. "However, a budget laden with policy, which involves significant debate, discussion and public input, is irresponsible given the magnitude of the crisis we are currently facing. This year's budget should be bare bones and deal strictly with the state's fiscal matters. There is no need to divide, distract and divert attention at this time."

There are several policy-related items that could be in the budget that should not be pushed through without further consideration, Deputy Minority Leader Griffo said. These include:

- Addressing public safety issues and social policy.

- A 30-day amendment that would take away power from local governments and limit local input when it comes to the siting of energy projects.
- Initiatives that would push more burden onto counties and businesses that are already affected by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Streamlining the state's court system.
- Reconfiguring the school aid formula.

"Gov. Cuomo has alluded to the fact that there are certain policy items in his budget proposal that are complicated and might have to be delayed. I hope that the Governor heeds his own advice," Deputy Minority Leader Griffo said. "I recognize and understand that we should be capable of addressing and doing a number of things even when in a crisis, but now is not the time to compound the issues and consternation that New Yorkers face. These are issues that have the potential to divide at a time when we should remain focused on unity. Our focus continues to be on addressing the current COVID-19-related crisis and helping our struggling, fearful and worried communities during this difficult time – not policy items that could have an adverse effect and can wait for later. We can go back and address policies and other initiatives that deserve more consideration, deliberation and examination once this public health crisis has subsided."

Deputy Minority Leader Griffo has been critical of past budgets that have included policy items that should be independently and transparently scrutinized – not crammed into a fiscal document that is passed in the middle of the night while New Yorkers are sleeping.

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