



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## State Senator Gustavo Rivera on the 2021-2022 New York State Budget

GUSTAVO RIVERA April 7, 2021

| ISSUE: **2021-2022 STATE BUDGET**

“Despite the strained financial reality that New York is facing, the Senate Majority, under the leadership of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, will deliver an incredibly robust, progressive budget that will provide New Yorkers with the resources and services needed as we continue our road to recovery from the devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In my ten years as a legislator, I can attest that the budget negotiations were always inextricably centered around the Governor’s priorities, rather than those of New Yorkers. This year, we were able to push back on some of the most damaging measures through a more balanced level of input from the legislature. As the Senate concludes voting on the budget and the Assembly takes up the final budget bills, I look forward to continued victories by the Legislature through the remainder of this year’s legislative session. I am proud to have voted for every one of the bills in the 2021-22 Budget.”

**Health**

“As Chair of the Senate Health Committee, I am proud that we restored potentially devastating Medicaid cuts to hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other Medicaid-supported programs. As I have said on multiple occasions, our communities cannot afford cuts to a program as vital as Medicaid and other critically important health services. It is our responsibility to keep moving forward and ensure that every New Yorker receives quality and affordable healthcare.

Within this budget, we continued our efforts to regulate and reform our State’s nursing homes by including a measure that will require them to spend at least 70% of their revenue on direct patient care in an effort to improve the quality of care and safety of their residents and workers. Further, we will delay by two years the implementation of the Medicaid pharmacy carve out on the 340B program for already financially burdened Federally Qualified Health Centers and safety net providers. We also enhance New York’s health plan marketplace to expand healthcare coverage for uninsured new mothers.”

#### Highlights of the 2021-2022 Health and Mental Hygiene Budget Section:

- Restores \$180.5 million in Medicaid cuts to hospitals, \$74.25 million to long-term care, \$60 million to mainstream managed care, and millions more to various other Medicaid-supported programs.
- Protects the financial viability of federally qualified health centers and safety net providers who provide comprehensive, wraparound health services to vulnerable populations through preservation of the 340B program by delaying the pharmacy benefit carve out from Medicaid Managed Care for two years.

- Restores many of the harmful public health cuts proposed by the Executive, including but not limited to money specific to New York City for public health works, rural health, and healthcare workforce.
- Provides nearly \$2 billion for minimum wage increases for healthcare workers who provide Medicaid services.
- Eliminates premiums for Essential Plan coverage for more than 400,000 New Yorkers and expects to cover an additional 100,000 enrollees who are currently uninsured, including eliminating premiums for dental and vision coverage.
- Requires the Department of Health to meet enhanced reporting requirements on the programs included under the Medicaid Global Cap.
- Includes nursing home reforms to address the percentage of revenue that a facility must spend on direct patient care as well as staffing.
- Provides \$64 million for acute care facilities and nursing homes to increase nurse staffing levels to provide better quality of care for nursing home patients.
- Requires that the state revisit the fiscal intermediaries allowed to administer the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) to ensure geographic diversity and to give preferences to those serving individuals with developmental disabilities as well as religious, racial, and ethnic minorities.
- Expands eligibility for the Silver Plan on the New York State Health Plan Marketplace to extend coverage for new mothers from 60 days to a year after they give birth who would otherwise not be able to afford coverage.

### **Senate District 33**

“One of the most important parts of my job as a legislator is to support and uplift those organizations who are tirelessly serving the people of the 33rd Senate District in the Bronx. I’m proud to announce that this budget includes millions of dollars in funding for local nonprofits, small business, internet access expansion, and many more programs that will aid our community in the Bronx directly.”

The direct relief in this year’s budget includes:

- At least \$650,000 for local organizations in Senate District 33, including senior centers, community centers, free legal service providers, and community health centers.
- Continuing \$108 million for the development of the Kingsbridge Armory.
- \$800 million for the Small Business Recovery Grant Program with \$300 million allocated to businesses of 100 or fewer employees that did not get any federal help.
- Mandating all internet service providers to offer high speed internet for low-income consumers by expanding the eligibility criteria.
- \$2.4 billion for a Covid-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program for any eligible household that pays 30% or more of their income towards rent to receive up to 12 months of rental and utility arrears and 3 months of prospective rent assistance.

## **Revenue**

“Billionaires, millionaires, and large corporations in our State have gotten richer during the COVID-19 pandemic while many working class New Yorkers and small businesses are struggling to get by. That’s why we fought hard to include in this budget a series of progressive taxes that will raise approximately \$4.5 billion in revenue to fund programs and

services that New Yorkers rely on and need to recover from the pandemic and economic turmoil of the past year.

Despite a number of opposing voices, the Legislature reached an agreement that will create a first-in-the-nation \$2.1 billion Excluded Workers Fund to provide emergency income assistance to eligible undocumented New Yorkers who have not had access to any government relief in over a year. These essential workers deserve at least this level of support in the same way they have supported New York during this unprecedented time.”

Additional highlights include:

- Increases the current top state personal income tax rate of 8.82% rate to 9.65% for individual filers whose income is over \$1 million and joint filers over \$2 million.
- Establishes two new brackets at a rate of 10.30% for those whose income is between \$5 million and \$25 million and 10.90% for those whose income is over \$25 million.
- Delivers \$440 million in property tax relief for 1.3 million New Yorkers earning under \$250,000. The income tax credits will range between \$250 and \$350.

## **Education**

“It is our responsibility to provide our children with the resources they need to have the quality education they deserve. For decades, parents and advocates have fiercely demanded equitable and full funding of all schools across our State, especially those in underserved, high-need communities, like the ones I represent.

I can proudly say this budget will provide a three-year phase-in of Foundation Aid, ensuring

that all districts receive their full Foundation Aid by the 2023-24 school year. This budget also makes a significant investment in making higher education more financially accessible.”

Additional highlights include:

- \$1.4 billion increase in Foundation Aid and a three-year Foundation Aid phase-in that will finally fulfill the State’s commitments under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity.
- Increases the maximum award under the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) by \$500 to assist the neediest students and eliminate the TAP Gap in four years.
- Restores \$72 million of the Governor’s proposed operating aid cuts to SUNY and CUNY.