



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elijah Reichlin-Melnick

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ELIJAH REICHLIN-MELNICK April 7, 2021



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New City, NY - Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick announced that provisions of the adopted 2021-2022 NYS budget will provide billions of dollars of funding and relief to schools, hospitals, local governments, middle class taxpayers, parks, seniors, veterans, and public safety. The budget will also save the Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center from a proposal by the Governor to close the facility.

This historic budget makes unprecedented investments in the middle class and will help make sure that as citizens and businesses rebuild from the pandemic, New York works for everyone, not just the wealthy and the well-connected.

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*State Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick said, "This enacted budget delivers more for the people of Rockland and Westchester Counties than any state budget in the past decade. The budget includes millions in relief for property taxpayers, and brings home over \$60 million in new funding for local schools. This budget also invests millions in new money into infrastructure, with a historic investment in local roads, state and local parks, clean air and clean water. We have created a new \$1 billion plan to help small businesses recover from the pandemic, and create new jobs here in Rockland and Westchester Counties as we build back a better and more equitable New York."*

**Education:** The finalized 2021 Education budget provides significant support to K-12 education, Pre-K, libraries, and student aid. It includes the largest ever increase in state-funding to schools.

- The budget finally makes good on the state's responsibility to fund public education, guaranteeing every district at least 60% of the Foundation Aid they are owed, and committing to a full phase-in of all Foundation Aid within 3 years. School districts in District 38 will receive over \$60 million in additional state aid, an increase of 32% from last year. Districts like Nanuet and Ossining that have been chronically shortchanged by the

state's funding formula will see the largest benefits of the aid increase.

- The budget also includes a major expansion of pre-K for 4-year-olds around the state, including over 400 spots for kids in our district.
- In higher education, NYS stepped up to support students from working families by increasing the maximum Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award by \$500, the first increase to TAP funding in seven years. This increase will also help SUNY schools balance their budgets.
- Public libraries, which were originally put on the chopping block by the Governor, were protected from major budget cuts by restoring \$7.1 million in state aid for a total of \$94 million, and investing in a new capital grant program.

**Middle Class Tax Relief:** The enacted 2021-2022 budget provides millions of middle-class New Yorkers with income and property tax relief that they need and deserve. The 2021-2022 State Budget:

- Creates a new \$440 million property tax circuit breaker program which will provide relief to approximately 1.3 million households paying more than 6% of their income in property taxes.
- Restores \$394 in middle class income tax cuts that the Governor had proposed to delay.

**Small Business:** The enacted 2021-2022 budget includes strong support for small businesses who have struggled throughout this pandemic, and delivers investments to support job growth opportunities in Rockland and Westchester Counties. The 2021-2022 enacted Budget includes:

- A historic \$1 billion investment in New York's small businesses, which will supplement billions of dollars of federal aid.
- Creates a new \$40 million Arts and Cultural Organization Recovery Grant Program via New York State Council on the Arts to help the non-profit arts sector in New York State recover from effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of this \$40 million, the budget creates a stand-alone \$1 million "ReStart the Arts" program specifically for Rockland and Westchester Counties.
- Creates the Pandemic Recovery and Restart Program, a \$35 million Restaurant Return-to-Work Tax Credit to help restaurants get back up and running.

**Environment:** The enacted Budget extends renewable energy initiatives to meet goals set in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and makes major investments in state and local parks. The 2021-2022 State Budget:

- Authorizes a \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act to fund environmental improvements that preserve, enhance, and restore New York's natural resources and reduce the impact of climate change. The Bond Act will need to be approved by voters, and will appear on the ballot in the 2022 general election.
- Fully funds the Environmental Protection Fund, which supports the stewardship of public lands, including state parks and millions of acres of public lands throughout the state, and has historically been under-funded.
- Provides a new \$500 million fund for clean water infrastructure projects.

**Health and Mental Health:** The budget culminates a successful effort led by Senator Reichlin-Melnick to save Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center (RCPC) from a proposal by Governor Cuomo to close the facility. Protecting RCPC means that hundreds of Hudson Valley families will be able to receive quality services locally. The 2021-2022 enacted budget also invests in our public health and mental health systems including restoring \$415 million in the Governor's proposed Medicaid cuts for hospitals and healthcare providers, and restoring \$113 million in proposed cuts to public health programs.

**Infrastructure:** The 2021-2022 enacted budget makes significant investments in infrastructure including a 30% increase in state funding for local road maintenance programs.