



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham Acclaims FY 2023 State Budget for Expanding Pandemic Recovery Investments in the Hudson Valley

PETE HARCKHAM April 9, 2022

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*Albany, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham, along with his colleagues in the State Legislature, passed the FY2023 State Budget today, which he acclaimed as a “critical and timely” expansion of the important pandemic recovery investments begun last year. Included in the budget are spending initiatives to help Hudson Valley families and small businesses economically, tougher penalties for gun crimes and a funding boost for the environmental bond that will be voted on later this year.

“A full economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is on its way in this new State Budget,” said Harckham. “With the worst aspects of this public health crisis behind us, our focus is on residents and

businesses still in need of help. Helping children succeed in school, supporting our workforce and providing tax cuts to help middle class families, seniors and small businesses—those were some of our priorities that have been met in the new budget.”

The total spending for the FY2023 State Budget is roughly \$220 billion, \$4 billion over the Executive Proposed Budget. Last year state lawmakers approved a \$212 billion budget.

A key investment in the budget to assist New Yorkers in getting back to work is \$7 billion in child care funding over the next four years, double the amount of current spending. Also, \$7.4 billion will be spent over four years to give home care aides a \$3 per hour raise for their work.

Many of the initiatives in the new budget will have a strong and positive impact on the 40th Senate District (SD40), Harckham noted, particularly in areas such as support for education, help for small businesses and environmental protection / climate change mitigation.

## EDUCATION

- Total amount of school aid is \$31.5 billion
- A whopping \$287 million in Foundation Aid for school districts in SD40
- The FY2023 Foundation Aid increase amounts to \$45.6 million—up 18.9% from last year
- Every school district in SD40 saw an increase in aid
- \$15.2 million for Universal Pre-Kindergarten for school districts in SD40
- Universal Pre-K increase amounts to \$5.6 million—up 59.4% from last year
- New Pre-K funding creates 1,037 new slots for students
- Full reimbursement to colleges for the TAP Gap, resulting in payments of \$48.8 million to SUNY and \$59.6 million to CUNY

“These budget investments reflect an ongoing commitment to education in New York,” said Harckham. “We are lifting students up, while keeping property taxes down.”

## TAXES

- Total tax cuts and credit of \$3.6 billion

- Accelerating the middle-class tax breaks, enacted in 2019, which will produce a projected \$4.2 billion in annual savings for six million households.
- \$2.2 billion in STAR program tax relief.
- Gas tax holiday from June 1 to December 31, eliminating 16 cents a gallon of costs to consumers.
- \$250 million for residents in utility arrears from the pandemic

“Through the pandemic, the middle-class has struggled, so it makes sense to continue advancing tax cuts to help them along,” said Harckham. “Enacting the gas tax will help residents and small businesses as well, all of whom are being overwhelmed by rising costs.”

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Cracking down on the trafficking of illegal guns
- Putting a stop to the cycle of repeat offenders
- Protecting the victims of domestic violence and hate crimes
- Investing in mental health infrastructure.
- An additional \$110 million to public protection agencies to support the following programs; gun violence prevention, legal services, pretrial services, alternatives to incarceration, and discovery reform

“Safeguarding our residents is not about slogans and demagoguery—it’s about smart and focused initiatives that lessen crime in our communities,” said Harckham.

## HELP FOR FAMILIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES

- \$7 billion in child care funding over the next four year
- Comprehensive plan for affordable housing
- \$250 million for residents in utility arrears from the pandemic
- Wage increases for frontline workers
- Continuation of small businesses grant program modelled after the NY Forward Grant program legislation Harckham introduced.

- Authorizing sale of beverage to-go sales from bars and restaurants for three years

“The commitment to helping families and small businesses statewide remains strong, and these investments reflect a continuing sense that more needs to be done right now,” said Harckham. “The best way to keep Main Street alive is with investments that spur and incentivize growth.”

## ENVIRONMENT

- Environmental Bond Act pushed to \$4.2 billion
- Bond act includes \$500 million electric school buses and related charging infrastructure
- Freshwater wetlands protection, modeled on Harckham’s bill, which will safeguard fragile drinking water supplies and create low-cost climate change / carbon mitigation

“The ambitious goals of the state’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) require us to move to an emission free future while preparing our communities for the challenges inherent in climate change,” said Harckham. “These are transitions that need to be made, and New York will continue to lead the nation in this regard.”

## FIGHT AGAINST THE OVERDOSE CRISIS

- \$500 million increase for the Office of Addiction Services and Supports
- Enacted Harckham’s legislation empowering OASAS to certify recovery residences.
- Ensured the sanctity of the opioid settlement board. Requiring the board to convene before money goes out the door.
- 5.4% COLA increase for the health and human services workforce.

“As chair of the Senate Committee of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, I know too well how opioids and the overdose crisis have impacted communities statewide,” said Harckham. “These investments will save lives, and I appreciate the strong support of the governor and my colleagues in this regard.”

“Every new budget reflects the challenges we are facing, and how we are working to safeguard our residents while creating opportunities for greater and more shared prosperity,” said Harckham. “New York State continues to move forward in terms of recovering from the devastation of the pandemic while ensuring a stronger future for all.”