



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Luis R. Sepúlveda

Senator Luis Sepúlveda on the Adoption of NYS' Budget

LUIS R. SEPÚLVEDA April 11, 2022

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After months of hard work and thanks to the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, we have reached a consensus on the state budget. I want to tell you about significant advances for our community such as a wage increase for home health caregivers and a reduction in gas prices that translate into more money available for families.

There are many developments that we will be discussing in the coming weeks, but I want to say that some of my past concerns and reservations were unfortunately reflected in the final outcome of the budget negotiation process. Despite providing relief in some areas, this year's budget fell short in caring for our Latino community. The significance of Latino political and social leadership in New York State and the needs of our community is a reality that has not been taken into account in this budget. One example of this is leaving thousands of undocumented adults without health insurance. It is unfortunate when a human being cannot count on health insurance solely due to their immigration status. This is something that our community has been crying out for without avail.

I want to announce to my community that I am not satisfied but we have had some successes in this battle for equality and vindication of our rights. For some time, I have advocated that people who have served sentences in prisons should not have to pay a fee for their birth certificate upon release, and those on parole should not have to pay for supervision; both of these proposals were included in the budget at my behest. Further, working with Mayor Adams I was able to increase the NYC Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as well as significant business and property tax credits for the promotion and expansion of child

care in the Bronx and other underserved areas of the City. I am also proud to announce that we were able to successfully fight for \$800 million of funding for the ERAP program, funds that we fought tirelessly in order to save hundreds of families in need of assistance in rental arrears.

I repeat to the political leadership what I have said for many months: Latino power in New York State is real and must be heard.