



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Senate Republicans Unveil Plan to Create a More Affordable New York

ROBERT G. ORTT February 13, 2023

| ISSUE: **NYS BUDGET, AFFORDABILITY**



ALBANY, NY – In response to a fiscally irresponsible state budget proposal that continues uncontrolled state spending, **New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt** and **members of the Republican Conference** today unveiled their vision to provide relief and create “A More Affordable New York.” This is one of several impactful initiatives being proposed as part of the conference’s Rescue New York Agenda. While Governor Hochul and her Democratic allies in the Legislature continue ignoring everyday New Yorkers with the same old tax and spend routine, the Senate Republican Conference is putting forward real solutions to help the middle class and build a stronger economy statewide.

“We are here today to show New Yorkers that there are people in Albany who hear them. We have actionable, achievable solutions to make our state affordable again. The policies coming from the Hochul Administration and her allies on the left aren’t just wrong, they are irresponsibly out of touch with reality and they’re driving people out of the state. While hundreds of thousands of middle class families are struggling to afford everyday necessities, the Democrats led by Kathy Hochul are prioritizing \$300 million for individuals who are here illegally. While seniors on fixed incomes worry about their heating bills, they’re moving to ban fossil fuel hook-ups to new and existing buildings and drive costs up even further,” **said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.**

“Despite paying lip service to the importance of supporting small business, the reality is that Governor Hochul and Albany Democrats have only reinforced New York’s standing as the worst place to do business in the nation. The most recent blow is the crushing \$7.8 billion in unemployment insurance fund debt they’ve pushed onto the backs of small business owners. Created by their state mandated shutdown of our economy and unchecked fraud, their refusal to accept responsibility for their debt is outrageous. Our plan would correct this injustice and spare employers, and their customers, from added costs by shifting repayment responsibility to the state and creating a reserve fund to guard against future insolvency,” **said Senator George Borrello, SD 57th.**

“New Yorkers have been shouldering the burden of Albany’s fiscal irresponsibility for far too long. Unfunded mandates from above bear down on our local governments in Nassau County and across our state. These edicts are always implemented without any community input and then, in turn, end up raising our property taxes and increasing our cost of living, which eventually drives hard-working taxpayers out of our state. I stand firmly against the elimination of enhanced Medicaid payments that our local governments should be receiving. Eliminating this would put further pressure on our municipalities to raise local property taxes. Our job in state government is to alleviate the financial stress that our constituents are enduring. Packing on more costs from Albany furthering their financial strain is not the answer,” **said Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, SD 9th.**

“Like my Senate Republican colleagues, I am deeply concerned about the Governor’s proposed budget. Her suggestion of a 46% MTA transportation mobility tax increase is particularly egregious. The mobility tax should be repealed entirely. My constituents in Rockland County are already suffering without a one-seat ride to the city and unreliable service. The MTA needs a top-to-bottom audit before throwing more money at the problem,” **said Senator Bill Weber, SD 38th.**

The Republican Conference specifically called out several Executive Budget proposals that would exacerbate New York State’s lack of affordability, including:

1. Eliminating enhanced Medicaid payments to local governments, which would create enormous pressure to increase local property taxes;
2. Increasing unemployment insurance taxes on already struggling small businesses and farms;
3. Further increasing payroll taxes in the MTA region; and
4. Siphoning hundreds of millions of dollars in state money into New York City to pay for the settlement of illegal immigrants.

In contrast, the Senate Republicans' "A More Affordable New York" initiative will put money back into the pockets of taxpayers and make our state affordable once again as families continue to struggle with rising costs due to record high inflation, including:

1. Eliminating costly unfunded mandates that drive up local property taxes;
2. Protecting businesses from unemployment insurance tax hikes by creating an Unemployment Insurance Solvency Reserve Fund and repealing the interest assessment surcharge, which is the assessment on businesses to pay back the UI Trust Fund's deficit;
3. Repealing Congestion Pricing; and
4. Providing relief from heating costs geared toward the middle class.

"Staten Islanders need real solutions to make living and working here more affordable. New Yorkers are leaving our state due to the seemingly endless surge in the cost of living, with even more taxes and fees just around the corner. Senate Republicans have solutions to provide relief for taxpayers who desperately need it. We need to repeal congestion pricing before it siphons billions of dollars away from hard working people, we need to provide property tax relief, and we need to protect families and small businesses from left wing madness," **said Senate Deputy Republican Leader Andrew Lanza.**

"My constituents continue to feel overburdened by the cost of living, by the cost of doing business, and by the everyday challenges of being a taxpayer in New York State. During this legislative session, we must take decisive action that relieves taxpayers, working families, seniors, farmers, and small businesses. Inaction will only drive more people to leave New York State," **said Senator Pam Helming, Chair of the Republican Conference.**

“Senate Republicans are focused on economic recovery and helping families regain their footing after a tough couple of years. New fees for small businesses, new taxes on hiring workers and new mandates on local governments just aren’t going to get the job done. We have the resources to fully-fund our schools, provide homeowners with relief on the property taxes and invest in programming for our veterans and their families. We can’t afford to keep wasting tax dollars on failed policies and programs that just don’t work. It’s that simple,” **said Senator Jake Ashby, SD 43rd.**

“Residents and businesses across New York continue to pay some of the highest taxes in the nation. We need to control state spending by making the two-percent spending cap permanent and help local governments control property taxes by eliminating costly state mandates. We can also improve New York's business climate by cutting burdensome and unnecessary regulations placed on employers which make it more difficult for them to succeed. As taxpayers continue to face stubbornly high inflation, the government should be working to make our state more affordable, not less,” **said Senator Patrick Gallivan, SD 60th.**

“It’s no secret that New York has an affordability problem. People and families flee the state every day because they can’t afford to live here due to burdensome and crippling taxes, energy costs, regulations and mandates. The policies that we have seen supported and pushed for by the governor and legislative majorities are not working. New Yorkers need real, significant relief, as we have stressed and advocated for continuously. This plan will provide for that relief, help the middle class and strengthen and grow the state’s economy,” **said Senator Joseph Griffo, SD 53rd.**

“The fact is that New Yorkers shoulder the highest taxes of anyone in the country yet nothing works – our roads and bridges are among the worst, our test scores are among the lowest, our electric grid and water infrastructure are stressed to breaking and our trains don’t run on time. No wonder more and more of our neighbors have left. Our Senate Republican plan pushes back on years of Democrat mismanagement, offers relief to middle class New Yorkers, and offers hope that better days are ahead,” **said Senator Jack Martins, Vice Chair of the Senate Republican Conference.**

“While the budget presented by Governor Hochul will increase costs on our already struggling residents, this plan makes reducing costs for New Yorkers the goal. Proposals like banning fuel choice for our families and increasing costs on businesses may satisfy ideologues but they will do real damage to our economy. It is important that our state accepts reality, and that is why I am proud to stand with my Senate Republican Conference colleagues today to call on Governor Hochul to utilize our blueprint to help all of our residents and protect our state’s collective future,” **said Senator Mario R. Mattera, SD 2nd.**

“Governor Hochul has shown once again that her priorities are in line with special interest groups and not hard working, law abiding, tax paying New Yorkers. The Governor's recent budget proposal increases

spending by billions of dollars but delivers very little in terms of relief for struggling New York families. In fact, many of her climate change policies will result in families having to spend tens of thousands of dollars that they don't have, just to bring their homes into compliance. The Governor's proposals are anything but affordable and will continue to send New Yorkers fleeing to other states in record numbers. The Senate Republican Conference has a plan, entitled, 'A More Affordable New York,' that uses common sense solutions to deliver, not just relief for struggling families and businesses, but hope for a brighter, stronger future for New York," **said Senator Dean Murray, SD 3rd.**

"We are losing people at a record pace, inflation is wreaking havoc on household budgets, and going-out-of-business signs are rampant. The only way to turn these trends around is to get a grip on skyrocketing state spending, cut out of control taxes, and return affordability to our state. The governor's reckless budget scheme burns through more cash than Florida and Texas combined and leaves hard working New Yorkers with the bill. We need fundamental change and our Senate Republican initiatives will set us on the right course," **said Senator Peter Oberacker, SD 51st.**

"Albany Democrats readily acknowledge the affordability crisis causing the exodus of citizens to more affordable states; however, the Democrats can't give up increasing handouts to their base. They have no interest in reining in out-of-control spending, eliminating taxes, lowering costs, cutting burdensome regulations and mandates, or restoring public safety. We need to rescue New York by restoring the right priorities, rebuilding stronger and safer communities, and working toward a more responsible and sustainable future for middle-class communities, families, workers, businesses, industries, and taxpayers," **said Senator Tom O'Mara, SD 58th.**

"Instead of providing relief to families, seniors and small businesses who are being crushed by the state's high taxes and rising costs, the governor's budget exacerbates these issues, which will inevitably result in more residents fleeing New York State and a continued affordability crisis created by out-of-touch politicians," **said Senator Anthony Palumbo, SD 1st.**

"It's no mystery why New Yorkers are fleeing our state. Democrats continue the familiar pattern of reckless spending and high taxes designed to punish Long Islanders and suburban residents and businesses. I am happy to work with my Senate Republican colleagues to come up with an actionable plan that makes New York more affordable for middle-class families. Taxpayers deserve to have their voices heard, and our initiative will put money back into their pockets and help make our state affordable once again," **said Senator Steven Rhoads, SD 5th.**

"Many Hudson Valley residents already live in some of the least-affordable zip codes in the country. Add the headwinds of inflation and a looming recession into the mix and our region is in the grip of a full-blown affordability crisis. Families are hurting; many are living paycheck to paycheck. The Governor's

spending proposals, particularly on energy and the MTA payroll tax, could make matters dramatically worse. It's why I'm supportive of policies that lower costs for everyday residents and provide our small businesses with a fairer, less restrictive economic environment," **said Senator Rob Rolison, SD 39th.**

"Between a tax-and-spend climate and rising inflation, New York State is unaffordable for many. Governor Hochul's budget proposal would only continue these problems. The Senate Republican plan for 'A More Affordable New York' would ease costs for our hardworking families, ease the tax burden on homeowners and expand opportunity for all. I urge the governor and Democrat leaders to take action on these measures and provide our taxpayers with the relief they need," **said Senator Dan Stec, SD 45th.**

"Clearly, our state needs a course correction in its agenda to make it a more affordable place to live and grow a business because people are voting with their feet and escaping from New York in droves. When those who can afford to leave are gone, who will be left to pay the bill for New York's state budget? The over-burdened middle-class and working-class taxpayers. It's time to be reasonable and put money back in the hands of taxpayers as we propose in our 'A More Affordable New York' Plan," **said Senator Jim Tedisco, SD 44th.**

"By releasing the most expensive budget in history and including \$700 million for Hollywood and \$300 million for Broadway, it proves the executive's priorities lie with special interests and not for the good of everyday New Yorkers," **said Senator Mark Walczyk, SD 49th.**

"My constituents are struggling with increased costs and record inflation, and many are tightening their belts in order to make ends meet. But the bloated Executive Budget proposal continues to spend too much, tax too much, and does nothing to ease the burden for our residents. Long Islanders will be hit particularly hard by the unfair congestion pricing plan and the MTA payroll tax. Our Senate Republican conference understands that New Yorkers need relief, and the plan we are unveiling today will help provide that relief and make New York more affordable for all," **said Senator Alexis Weik, SD 8th.**

###