



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

## Senator Sean Ryan Touts State Budget Highlights

SEAN M. RYAN | May 2, 2023

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## SENATOR SEAN RYAN TOUTS STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

*Budget Focuses on Affordability and Economic Growth, and Omits Proposed Restrictions on Gas Appliances in Existing Buildings*

**ALBANY** – Today, May 2, 2023, New York State Senator Sean Ryan announced details of the FY 2023-2024 state budget that supports economic development, creates a better plan for building electrification,

invests heavily in education, and improves affordability for all New Yorkers.

**Senator Sean Ryan** said, “During budget negotiations, the Senate Majority has been focused on building a better future for families across our state. That hard work has paid off – the final state budget includes several big measures to make living in New York more affordable while keeping our economy thriving. We have also invested in programs to support small businesses, addressed well-founded concerns about the future of gas heating in our homes, and increased education funding to make sure our children have the support they need to thrive.”

Highlights of the state budget:

Notably, the budget does not include the proposed phase out of the use of natural gas in existing buildings. While it does create a plan to phase out the use of natural gas in new construction (by the end of 2025 for new buildings under seven stories and by the end of 2028 for remaining new buildings), it includes an exemption to permit fossil fuel-powered backup energy systems in new builds in recognition of the importance of backup generators in places like Western New York.

### **Education Funding**

The budget provides \$34 billion in school aid statewide, with a \$102.3 million increase (9.6%) in aid for school districts in the 61st Senate District. Included in that aid is the final rollout of fully funded Foundation Aid first delivered during a three-year phase in by the Senate Majority in 2021, ensuring every K-12 school district receives a year-to-year increase of at least 3%. Another \$150,000 is allocated to St. Mary’s School for the Deaf.

The budget also restores \$21.4 million for Teacher Centers, which provide direct assistance with the development and training of school district Professional Development Planning Committees and mentoring programs.

### **Free School Meals**

The budget provides \$135 million to provide an additional 294,000 students with meals at no

cost to their families or to the school in the 2023-24 school year. This will also eliminate the burdensome application process that often keeps eligible families from applying for free or reduced-price meals.

The budget adds \$1.4 million in additional funding for the Minority and Women-Owned Business Development Lending Program, increasing the program's funding to \$2 million.

The budget provides \$1.4 million in additional support for the Centers for Advanced Technology (CATs), providing \$1 million to each center, for a total of \$15 million. This funding supports three Centers at the University at Buffalo: the Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences (CBLS), Center of Excellence in Materials Informatics (CMI), and the Center for Advanced Technology in Big Data & Health Sciences (UB CAT). It also includes \$1.9 million in additional support for the Centers of Excellence (COEs), providing \$1 million to each center, for a total of \$14 million.

The Budget also includes Senator Ryan's legislation ([S.1824](#)) to establish a matching grant program for the Small Business Innovation in Research and Small Business Technology Transfer grant programs, which will promote commercialization and job growth by funding some of New York's most promising small businesses.

### **Eliminating the Effects of Inflation on the Minimum Wage**

The budget raises the minimum wage for each of the next three years, increasing it to \$16 per hour upstate by 2027. After that, future increases will be tied to inflation to ensure that people earning the minimum wage will not see their wages effectively decreased if the cost of living goes up.

### **Supporting Families**

The budget expands child care eligibility up to 85% of the State median income level and

decreases low-income families' contributions from 10% of their income which exceeds the federal poverty level to 1% of that income. It also expands the eligibility for the Empire State Child Credit to include children under the age of five.

### **Supporting Homeowners and Renters**

The budget adds an extra \$10 million of funding for the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP), increasing it to \$40 million. HOPP provides free legal services to prevent homeowners facing mortgage and tax foreclosure from losing their homes.

The budget also increases funding for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), adding an additional \$391 million to benefit Section 8 recipients and their landlords, who were not previously eligible for the program. It also provides \$15 million in additional funding for legal representation for eviction, for a total of \$50 million

### **Improving Access to Healthy Foods**

The budget allocates \$2 million to support the Double Up Food Bucks Program, which provides New Yorkers who utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) with a \$1-for-\$1 match to buy fresh, New York-grown fruits and vegetables at participating small retail, grocery, and farm direct sites. It also provides \$24 million for FeedMore WNY.

### **Supporting Human Services Agencies and Safety Net Hospitals**

The budget provides \$5.1 million in additional funding to increase the Human Services Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) from 2.5% to 4%, for a total cost of \$13.6 million for all workers the New York Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), and Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).

The budget also includes \$35 million to support 340B-funded entities and an additional \$500 million to support staffing for distressed hospitals.

### **Refugee Resettlement and Supporting AAPI**

The budget includes a record \$7 million in funding for refugee resettlement agencies through the New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program (NYSESRP). As the first state to provide funding to support refugee integration with the creation of NYSESRP in 2017, New York has been a leader in its commitment to refugees. More than 90% of refugees coming into New York settle in upstate communities.

The budget also provides \$30 million for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) equity budget coalition priorities for crisis intervention initiatives and community-based programs to combat bias crimes.

The budget includes \$20 million of funding for Zoos, Botanical Gardens, and Aquariums (ZBGA) and adds \$10 million for ZBGA capital projects. It also increases operating aid for the New York State Council on the Arts by \$50 million to a total of \$92.8 million and adds \$20 million for capital projects and allocates \$225,000 for the Western New York Land Conservancy.

It also includes \$5 million in funding for *Alive! Downtowns*, a coalition of 13 not-for-profit historic performing arts centers that includes Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo which are all economic, educational and cultural engines serving Upstate New York.