



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Iwen Chu

## AAPI State Legislators Celebrate \$30 Million In Historic Funding for AAPI Communities

IWEN CHU May 3, 2023

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**ALBANY, NY** – The Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget includes a historic commitment of \$30 million to the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in New York State, an increase of \$10 million from the funding allocated in last year’s budget. AAPI State legislators join the AAPI Equity Budget Coalition (EBC), a coalition of over 100 AAPI community leaders and nonprofits, in celebrating this historic investment which will better provide Asian-led organizations with the resources they need to serve their communities.

This funding, successfully led by Senator Chu and Assemblymember Lee as part of the Senate and Assembly one-house budgets, is a response to the extraordinary needs of New York’s AAPI community and in recognition of the legislature’s responsibility to support and protect vulnerable New Yorkers. Asian Americans are currently experiencing an unprecedented rise in hate, with anti-AAPI hate crimes in New York City rising by 361% in 2020 alone. In addition, AAPI New Yorkers are still recovering from the disproportionate impacts suffered from COVID-19, as well as the long-term consequences of the historic underfunding of their neighborhoods and communities by the city and state.

The \$30 million will be used to fund 100-plus AAPI organizations to support critical programs for AAPI communities that are uniquely suited to the needs of these communities and will build the capacity of local organizations to continue providing their services in the future.

The inclusion of this funding in the FY24 budget moves New York one step closer to a future where these communities are fully protected and supported. Although there is much to be done to achieve this goal, this funding represents a significant achievement to addressing inequities that disadvantage AAPI communities across the state. We look forward to building upon this success in the upcoming years.

9

For too long, AAPI communities have been overlooked, underfunded, and underrepresented. New York State is making the right progress with this historic-level funding of \$30 Million. In the past few years, anti-Asian hate crimes skyrocketed nearly 400%. No community deserves to live in fear of hate and violence. The funding passed in the State budget will combat hate crimes and Anti-AAPI violence. Additionally, the funding will build on the work organizations have done on the ground in communities to deliver adult literacy, youth education, senior programs, community development, and necessary social services,” **said NYS Senator Iwen Chu**. “I am honored to have led this fight in the State Senate and appreciate the support of my colleagues. I thank the Equity Budget Coalition, my fellow AAPI State legislators, and all advocates for their work to achieve this historical achievement. This is an important step, but our fight does not stop here. We must continue to work with AAPI leaders and organizations to adequately meet the needs of our communities.”

“With this funding, we are empowering Asian New Yorkers by giving them the tools they need to build support systems that work best for their neighborhoods,” **said Assemblymember Grace Lee, Co-Chair of the Asian Pacific American (APA) Task Force**. “As a legislative body, it is our job to make those who are invisible visible and ensure that the most vulnerable are protected and supported. After a long history of overlooking their needs, we are sending the AAPI community a message that their voices are heard and their lives are valued in New York. I thank Governor Hochul, Speaker Heastie and Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for recognizing AAPI communities in this year’s budget. Thank you also to my Asian Pacific American Task Force Co-Chair Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani and Senators Iwen Chu and John Liu for their teamwork on this hard-fought win.”

“AAPI New Yorkers are the fastest growing group in our state and the investments we’ve put forward in our final budget are a historic step towards providing those very communities the resources they need to thrive here in our state,” **said NYS Assembly Member Zohran Mamdani**.

"This historic funding is a clear demonstration of what our community is capable of when we are united not just in number, but in principle. There are more Asian Americans than ever in the State Senate and Assembly, all of whom are fully engaged and steadfast in their advocacy on behalf of our communities. We represent diverse districts with constituencies from around the globe, but our experiences as Asian Americans are similar, and our needs are the same as any other American – that of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Throughout our history in America, and especially in the post-pandemic world, those needs have grown to include a clear need for equality, justice and fairness, and our community-based organizations are best suited to work hand-in-hand with our varied AAPI communities through education, community outreach, language access, programs and services. Thank you to Senator Chu, Assembly Member Lee, and all our colleagues for fighting together to make sure our communities are

proudly represented in the state legislature" **said NYS Senator John Liu**

"We are thrilled to see historic-level funding for the AAPI community, the fastest growing minority group in NYS, included in this year's state budget," **said NYS Senator Jeremy Cooney**, the first Asian-American elected to state office outside of Greater NYC. "I am equally pleased to see this investment not only in the growing populations in the greater New York City region, but also in cities across upstate, including my hometown of Rochester."

"I am thrilled that we successfully secured funding in this year's budget to provide much-needed resources to AAPI organizations across various sectors working to uplift our community every day. This is another important step towards promoting the well-being and success of the AAPI population in New York, as well as to continue addressing the unique challenges and inequalities we face." **said NYS Senator Kevin Thomas**

"Today, we've made significant progress by securing crucial funding for our AANHPI communities in the New York State budget. This investment goes beyond addressing injustices; it's about creating a more equitable society for all. As we combat systemic discrimination, providing resources to uplift and protect the AAPI community is vital, and together, we'll make tangible strides in New York State" **said NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga.**

"Asian American and Pacific Islanders are the fastest-growing group in New York State, more than doubling in some Upstate counties. Asian Americans contribute almost \$121 billion to the economy in New York City alone. Now that AAPI New Yorkers have unprecedented representation in Albany, myself and my AAPI Caucus colleagues have crafted an Equity Budget that works for our community. As the first South Asian woman elected to New York State Office, I am proud to join my AAPI Caucus colleagues in providing vital funding for community organizations, anti-violence work, campaigning against anti-Asian hate, language access, data disaggregation, and a host of other community investments. Together, we are going to reverse the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes, address health disparities, promote civic engagement, and give AAPI New Yorkers the seat at the table they earned. After passing the budget, our AAPI caucus will persevere by passing my bills to make Diwali a New York City school holiday and create the Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission." **said NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar.**

"In what was a grueling budget process, I'm glad to see the much-needed funds that are going to the AAPI community, including for legal and social services, crisis intervention, and more." **said NYS Assembly Member Sarahana Shrestha.**

"We're grateful that State leadership allocated \$30 million towards the AAPI Equity Budget Proposal. The New York State AAPI Equity Budget Coalition, a diverse group of over 100 AAPI-led and -serving organizations from across New York State, collectively fought for a budget that comprehensively targets the increased violence experienced by our communities, while providing resources to address the living conditions and safety nets of those most marginalized and in need of food access, mental health services, case management, and more," **said New**

**York State Equity Budget Coalition.** “The AAPI community is the fastest-growing community in our State, with significant growth on Long Island and Upstate. Our community is also navigating multiple crises at once, with our direct services providers struggling to keep up with demand after years of systemic underfunding. This is a significant step in the right direction and we look forward to the continued work with policymakers to address the safety and wellness of our diverse AAPI communities.”

### **About EBC**

The AAPI Equity Budget Coalition consists of a diverse array of over 100 AAPI organizations from across the state that are providing community-informed, culturally relevant, and language accessible services and community programs, and is jointly led by the Asian American Federation (AAF) and the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF). Programming and services address issues such as gender-based violence, healthcare, senior and youth programs, research, advocacy and legal assistance, as well as multi-service programming such as housing assistance, benefits navigation, small business support, workforce development/job training, food services, legal service, mental health support, violence intervention and prevention, aid to homeowners and tenants, safety-related services, and more.

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