



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Statement from Senator George Borrello on the 2023 Legislative Session

GEORGE M. BORRELLO June 10, 2023

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“As legislators, our job is to represent the interests of the New Yorkers we serve. What have New Yorkers repeatedly asked the Democrat-controlled Legislature and Governor to address? Affordability and crime. What did they get in return?

- A massive \$229 billion state budget laden with unsustainable spending and certain to

produce budget gaps in the near future.

- A state money grab of federal Medicaid funding from the counties which will force localities to raise property taxes between 7 and 14 percent to cover these state-mandated costs.
- A ban on natural gas and other fossil fuels in new construction beginning in 2025, which will drive up utility bills, raise housing costs and decrease energy reliability.
- A \$1 billion plus bill for New York taxpayers to address the migrant crisis, driven by New York's self-designated 'sanctuary' status.
- A lack of any meaningful improvements to the bail 'reform' disaster that continues to wreck havoc with public safety.
- A continuing, unfair and costly burden on small businesses of repaying the state's COVID-era unemployment insurance debt.
- A continuation of the attacks on agriculture through misguided policies like the Birds and Bees Act and approval of the 40-hour farm worker overtime threshold.
- Unconstitutional election 'reforms' like no-excuses absentee voting that New Yorkers already rejected at the polls in 2021 and moving local elections to even-numbered years. These election bills aren't about boosting participation; their true goal is to make it easier to elect more Democrats.

None of these 'achievements' or any of the other 500 plus measures Democrats passed this session are what hard working, taxpaying New Yorkers asked for. They are the result of the relentless push by radical special interests to enact socialist-leaning laws that will continue to weaken our economy, punish success and erode law and order.

New Yorkers should be especially outraged about the passage of additional pro-criminal measures that will only further hurt public safety in our cities and communities. The so-called 'Clean Slate' bill will seal criminal misdemeanor and most felony conviction records,

leaving potential employers, landlords, lenders and others in the dark about the past of an individual they are considering entrusting with a job, apartment, loan or other arrangement. This will leave innocent, unsuspecting New Yorkers, including children, vulnerable. It is apparent that our majority colleagues are unfazed by the increases in crime resulting from their disastrous bail and parole changes.

New Yorkers can be relieved that we were able to defeat some of the reckless proposals by the majorities and the Governor. At the top of the list are the governor's proposed affordable housing mandates and growth targets, which would have overridden local zoning and changed the character of our communities.

We also won a reprieve on some of the gas ban mandates in the governor's budget. My advocacy urging agricultural buildings to be added to the list of 'exempt' facilities was thankfully effective, providing some relief and certainty to our farmers. The final budget also removed the gas ban mandates on existing homes and businesses — for now.

Other key achievements include a conceptual agreement between the Seneca Nation and the state on a fair gaming compact. Our advocacy brought needed focus to this issue, which is critically important to the future of Western New York. We were also able to win passage of legislation to fix the funding problems the Department of Health created for our Nourish NY program. Getting this done was a priority for all of us who led the effort to make this valuable program permanent.

Ultimately, this session has ended without taking any significant steps to make New York a state where people want to live, rather than leave. Democrats' iron grip on power means they own the failures of the 2023 Session as well as the loss of each family and business who decide they've had enough of high taxes, rising crime and tone-deaf political leaders and leave for greener pastures.

I remain hopeful that when my Democratic colleagues return to their home districts and hear directly from their constituents, they may return to Albany in January, ready to tackle our challenges. In the meantime, my advocacy for the hardworking, law-abiding people in our region will continue.”

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