

For Immediate Release
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Senator Toby Ann Stavisky comments on the New York State 2020-21 Fiscal Year Budget

Senator Stavisky: I have been a State Senator for twenty years. In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, I can definitely say this has been the most difficult budget in my tenure, and possibly New York State history.

The state deficit ballooned from \$6 billion to nearly \$15 billion during this crisis. As Chair of the Higher Education Committee, Senator Stavisky was instrumental in restoring funding for SUNY and CUNY institutions. Child care centers have been restored for CUNY and SUNY systems and both systems will receive matching capital construction funds. Funds for the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies have been restored and the CUNY ASAP program is also back in this year's budget. That funding provides much needed services to low-income students at community colleges and has been proven to help students reach their graduation goals on time. Also, cuts to the SUNY small business centers have been eliminated.

Some other budget highlights include:

- Education funding remaining the same as last year
- Banning flavored vaping products
- Increasing funding for Unemployment Insurance
- Providing paid sick leave for all New Yorkers
- Implementing the automatic inclusion of the NYS Earned Income Tax Credit for all eligible New Yorkers
- Keeping guns out of the hands of those who commit domestic abuse
- Approving the "Restore Mother Nature Bond Act," and enhancing renewable energy

"Right now health care systems and small businesses need all the support they can get. We are in a time of crisis, and amid crisis comes a need for compromise," Senator Stavisky says. "The Senate Majority has worked tirelessly to approve a budget that is in the true best interest of New Yorkers. I thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and her Deputy, Senator Michael Gianaris, for their guidance during this difficult time. We New Yorkers will get through this unprecedented health emergency, but the economic impact will undoubtedly be felt for years. That is an obstacle that we cannot ignore, but also one we will certainly overcome. I am confident this state budget is a responsible first step toward that recovery."