

Rebecca Seawright



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New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright Announced Approval of Historic 'Rise and Unite' Investment and Funding Plan

New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright today announced the approval of a historic 'Rise and Unite' investment and funding plan that targets health care, housing, education, higher education, and local support for seniors and the working and middle class.

"I am proud to have fought for this 'Rise and Unite' state budget that will launch recovery and growth in the post-pandemic era," said Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright. *"This budget provides the funding to complete the recovery, restart the economy and restore and rebuild our communities. We must look to the future even as we press ahead to vaccinate every New Yorker and defeat COVID-19. "*

Speaker Heastie said the Legislature has delivered "a budget that will help New York rise from this health crisis and its devastating economic impacts while upholding our commitment to putting New York families first. *We have been able to make historic investments in our schools, keep higher education within reach, deliver the relief that our small businesses need to get back on their feet, and provide critical funding for child care that families need to get back to work.*"

Approximately \$3 billion in combined federal and state dollars is allocated for rent and homeowner relief. Funding includes \$100 million for a hardship fund for those who cannot access funds from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, \$100 million to reduce homelessness, and \$575 million in federal homeowner relief, including a three year, \$60 million commitment to provide legal assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure.

The approved budget provides \$800 million to help small businesses struggling to keep their doors open over the last year. It also includes \$25 million for the

NY Restaurant Resiliency Grant program and \$35 million in tax credits for restaurants in areas impacted by enhanced COVID-19 restrictions.

The approved spending plan includes \$200 million for Pandemic Emergency Assistance, which will provide federal funds to local social services districts for flexible emergency services, as well as funding for services for survivors of domestic violence and food assistance for older New Yorkers.

Increases in support for schools are on the way. The enacted budget includes \$19.8 billion in Foundation Aid and provides a multi-year commitment to fully fund Foundation Aid over the next three years. The plan allocates \$29.1 billion in funding to General Support for Public Schools, increasing \$3.1 billion, or 12 percent above last year. The budget includes a multi-year investment in pre-kindergarten, including \$105 million for this year.

The budget includes \$13.7 billion in funding for higher education. It rejects proposed tuition increases for the State University of New York and the City University of New York . It restores \$46.4 million in operating aid to SUNY and \$26.2 million to CUNY. The budget also provides SUNY and CUNY, each with \$100 million for expansion projects. The funding plan would increase the maximum Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award by \$500, bringing it from \$5,165 to \$5,665.

The Legislature approved significant investments in public transportation that will create jobs in construction and ensure New Yorkers can get where they are going safely and efficiently. The budget provides \$3.1 billion for the MTA projects for maintenance and expansion of services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put severe stress on our health care system and demonstrated the essential need for quality, affordable health care. The SFY 2021-22 budget includes \$193.8 million for health care services and systems throughout New York. It provides \$542 million in restorations to the Medicaid program, including \$204.4 million for hospitals and \$51.75 million for nursing homes.

The budget provides \$72.4 million for the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to create new service slots, including an expansion of certified housing supports, community habilitation, respite services, housing subsidies, self-direction of services and an expansion of day programs and employment options.

The approved spending plan invests \$1.84 billion in funding for the environment. This includes \$500 million for clean water infrastructure and \$300 million for the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

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