

NEWS FROM

Carl E. Heastie Speaker



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– Carl E. Heastie

Dear Neighbor(s):

First, I would like to thank you for your support over the many years I have represented the Northeast Bronx. I am deeply humbled by my recent election to be the first African-American Speaker of the New York State Assembly. It is your support and strength that has allowed me to achieve this historic accomplishment.

At the start of this budget process, the Assembly Majority pledged to stand strong for New York's families. We pledged to fight for a responsible spending plan that would make critical investments in the education of our students, to address the homelessness crisis facing our communities, and to give working families the resources they need to achieve financial independence. In my first budget as Speaker of the Assembly I am proud to say that we stood strong and succeeded in securing much-needed relief for hardworking Bronx families.

This spending plan provides \$1.6 billion in additional funding support for our public schools, which is an historic investment. It also funds our Higher Education Road to Success initiative to ensure that young men and women have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to compete in the workforce of tomorrow. This year's on-time state budget maintains critical access to quality health care and addresses the needs of New Yorkers, while holding spending under 2 percent growth and strengthening our state's economic recovery.

There is still much work to be done. I pledge to you that I will continue to work hard for the residents of New York State.

As always, if there is any way that I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me. My office is here to serve you.

With Love and Hope,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carl E. Heastie".

Carl E. Heastie
Speaker

Speaker Heastie Announces State Programs Funded by the \$439.5 Million JPMorgan Chase Settlement Funds

New York State allocated \$439.5 million in capital funding as part of a settlement with JPMorgan Chase for illegal banking practices. The state budget negotiated by Speaker Carl E. Heastie and the Assembly Majority was able to secure much-needed funding directed to support a new \$100 million allocation for necessary maintenance and repairs at New York City Housing Authority facilities.

\$124 million will be used for the NY Supportive Housing Program and an additional \$40 million of this settlement money will be used for the NYC Rental Assistance Program.

JPMorgan funds are also directed to a new \$25 million allocation for repairs at existing Mitchell Lama facilities. Many of these facilities are aging and in dire need of repairs and improvements, and this funding will allow residents to have safer housing.

2015-16 Budget Provides Funding for Vital Academic Programs to Put Students on the Higher Education Road to Success

Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie announced that the budget provides funding for key programs that will help make higher education more affordable and more attainable for New York students and their families. The enacted budget provides increases in funding for opportunity programs, enhances community college base aid and boosts outreach programs to put students on the Higher Education Road to Success.

“Funding for higher education programs was a priority of the Assembly’s Families First Budget. I am pleased that the final state budget includes crucial investments in higher education,” said Speaker Heastie. “By making higher education more accessible and affordable, we are building a brighter future for our children and our state.”

The budget also includes a 20 percent increase in funding for opportunity programs over last year. Opportunity programs administered by the State Education Department will be increased by 15 percent. Total allocated funding includes:

- \$26.8 million for the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP);
- \$23.3 million for Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK);
- \$1.12 million for College Discovery;
- \$15.3 million for Liberty Partnerships;
- \$29.6 million for the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP);
- \$13.1 million for the Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP); and
- \$9.98 million for the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP).

By raising community college base aid, the state reduces a financial burden for both students and municipalities. With this in mind, this year’s budget includes a base aid increase of \$100 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student at SUNY and CUNY community colleges, bringing the total base aid amount to \$2,597 per FTE. In addition, the budget includes \$2.5 million for CUNY’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), which aims to help motivated community college students earn their degrees as quickly as possible. \$7.5 million in funding for a new New York AIMS Merit Scholarship program, which awards funds based on merit and need, is also provided.

The budget dedicates \$1.4 million to allow disabled students to have greater access to the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).



Carl E. Heastie discusses the DREAM Act at a press conference with his Assembly Majority colleagues.

It also provides funding for outreach and training programs including:

- \$52.5 million for Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC);
- \$2.5 million for Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) Labs;
- \$1.5 million for the Graduate Achievement Placement program at SUNY; and
- \$6.6 million for the SUNY Graduate Diversity Program.

New York State’s SUNY and CUNY systems make available an array of services beyond traditional education. To ensure that SUNY hospitals are adequately funded to continue providing critical care and services to thousands of New Yorkers, the budget restores \$18.6 million for a total funding amount of \$87.9 million. Funding restorations are also provided to both SUNY and CUNY child care centers. Increased funding of \$1.1 million is provided to SUNY child care centers and \$902,000 is provided to CUNY child care centers, for a total of \$2.1 million and \$1.7 million respectively. The Legislature also commits \$1.5 million for CUNY LEADS, an academic and career program for students with disabilities at the City University of New York.

Additional support in the enacted state budget for higher education includes:

- \$3.45 million for Small Business Centers;
- \$1.5 million for the Social Worker Loan Forgiveness Program;
- a restoration of \$2 million to the Joseph Murphy Institute; and
- a restoration of \$500,000 to Cornell’s Vet School to help fund an increase in class size.

Carl E. Heastie Announces \$250 Million in Funding for the New York State Special Infrastructure Account

In order to create faster, more efficient access to New York City, \$250 million was allocated to enhance access to Penn Station. Speaker Heastie helped secure this funding through negotiations with the Senate and governor. This funding will be used for payment of costs for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority or the Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company for capital projects

to link the Metro-North Commuter Railroad directly to Penn Station, and to improve transportation access. "This funding will help residents get to and from work or their favorite sporting event while clearing congestion and stress on our city's infrastructure," said Speaker Carl E. Heastie.

Speaker Heastie Announces Support for MWBE Programs in Enacted 2015-16 State Budget

"The Assembly is committed to ensuring New York cultivates the best business environment in the nation, and that must include providing a leveled playing field for minority- and women-owned businesses," said Speaker Heastie. "It is imperative that we support programs that not only strengthen MWBEs, but also examine where disparities are greatest so they can be fixed."

The financial plan includes \$1 million for the Minority- and Women-Owned Business Development and Lending Program, which provides financial assistance to MWBEs, as well as to projects and programs that assist the development of entrepreneurship among minorities and women in New York.

The budget extends the Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise program for an additional year and allows for the hiring of seven new full-time employees to support the program. This important program has provided valuable opportunities for MWBE-certified businesses to access state contracting opportunities and technical assistance to secure them. The budget also extends the completion date of the MWBE Disparity Study by six months. The report will now be due by August 15, 2016.



Speaker Carl E. Heastie hosted many students at an open house for participants of the annual *Somos el Futuro* conference in his Albany office.

Investing in Quality Schools for Our Children



Speaker Heastie discusses increases in education funding in the state budget with constituents from the Bronx.

Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie announces a \$1.6 billion increase in education aid to New York State schools. "When it comes to our schools, students have to be our top priority," said Speaker Heastie. "By securing critical increases in funding to ensure our schools have the resources they need, this budget puts students first."

This year's state budget was a hard-fought battle between the Legislature and the governor over his radical education agenda. While the governor targeted teachers with drastic policy changes, the Assembly fought back to protect educators and boost funding for our schools.

In the end, the Assembly Majority fought for and won major concessions. We took the evaluation system out of the hands of the governor, and subject to some parameters, put it into the hands of the Board of Regents, who will work with experts to develop teacher evaluations that place less emphasis on state test scores. In addition, the Legislature fought hard to secure funding for the Regents so that they will have the resources to undertake this important task.

In all, the budget ensures \$24 billion in general support for public schools, which is an overall \$1.6 billion increase in education aid over last year. We were able to provide our children with much-needed resources that will put them on the road to success. Additionally, the budget protects last year's pre-K investment of \$300 million in New York City.

This includes:

- over \$9.2 billion for New York City schools, which is roughly \$505 million more than last year;
- a school aid run increase of nearly \$1.3 billion, which includes \$428 million more as a continued investment to address the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit that guarantees our children the right to a sound, basic education;
- \$75 million in grants for struggling schools – a portion of which will go to 12 schools in New York City;
- \$20 million in grants, including aid for libraries, teacher centers and bilingual education; and
- \$2.3 million to support a rate increase for special needs schools for a total of \$98.5 million.

SFY 2015-16 Budget Preserves Access to Affordable Health Care for New Yorkers

The SFY 2015-16 budget provides more than \$86.1 million in funding for Medicaid initiatives and restores millions in funding to support community health programs that will ensure access to quality, affordable care and service for New Yorkers. Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie fought to make sure that New York families have access to quality, affordable health care.

“An adequately funded and accessible public health system is essential to protecting the health and well-being of the people of this state,” said Heastie. “This year’s budget responsibly balances the needs facing our health care facilities and medical providers as well as the needs of the communities they serve.”

“Health care is a human right, and the Assembly Majority is committed to providing high-quality, accessible care throughout the state,” said Speaker Heastie.

In addition to providing capital assistance for hospital facilities, the enacted budget will continue to directly fund dozens of community health programs across the state and maintain prescription drug assistance to ensure that lower-income New Yorkers can continue to afford the treatment they need. The

final budget also restores funding to continue Medicaid support for elderly New Yorkers who require costly long-term care, without jeopardizing the financial viability of their spouses.

The Assembly fought for funding restorations to continue the availability of critical health programs such as maternal and child health services, chronic disease prevention, screening services for sickle cell and other genetic diseases, rural health development, obesity and diabetes prevention, prenatal care assistance and various school-based health programs.

Additional funds are provided for the following programs and services:

- Family Planning Services - \$750,000
- NYS Breast Cancer Network - \$50,000
- NYS Coalition for School-Based Health Centers - \$39,000
- Primary Care Development Corp. - \$400,000
- Community Health Advocates - \$500,000

Speaker Heastie Announces Funding for New Metropolitan Transportation Authority Stations

Speaker Heastie was able to negotiate a \$250 million allocation in the 2015 New York State budget that will be used to improve the infrastructure of the MTA. The Penn Station Access allocation will support, among other things, construction of four new Metro-North stations in the Bronx.

Speaker Heastie and the Bronx Delegation Secure \$2 Million for the Bronx Children’s Museum

This funding was secured as part of the budget negotiations to help aid in completion of the Kids’ Powerhouse Discovery Center (KPDC) project. This new facility will provide children of the Bronx with a place to experience cultural and educational enrichment.

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