

# NEWS FROM

## Carl E. Heastie Member of Assembly



Dear Neighbor,

This year's state budget was the most contentious I have had to negotiate since taking my leadership role. I am very proud of my Assembly Majority colleagues and the resiliency they displayed adopting a budget that accomplished many of our shared objectives.

As a result of our dedication and commitment, we were able to Raise the Age of criminal responsibility so that kids aren't sent to adult prisons. We were able to secure more funding for education and provide free college tuition at SUNY and CUNY schools. The \$153.1 billion 2017-18 state budget will provide our families the quality health care and critical services that our residents rely on and funds our shared New York values.

As always, there is still much more to be done to help our families thrive and find success. If there is anything I can help you with, please feel free to contact me.

With Love and Hope,

Carl E. Heastie  
Member of Assembly

## Carl E. Heastie Raises the Age, reforms criminal justice system to give our kids a second chance Measure also keeps children out of adult prisons

Assemblyman Heastie led negotiations that culminated in the 2017-18 state budget, which includes a measure to ensure young people who encounter New York's criminal justice system are treated fairly and given a better chance to turn their lives around. Raise the Age, which raises the age of criminal responsibility in New York from 16 to 18 years old, is an issue the Assembly Majority has championed for more than 12 years.

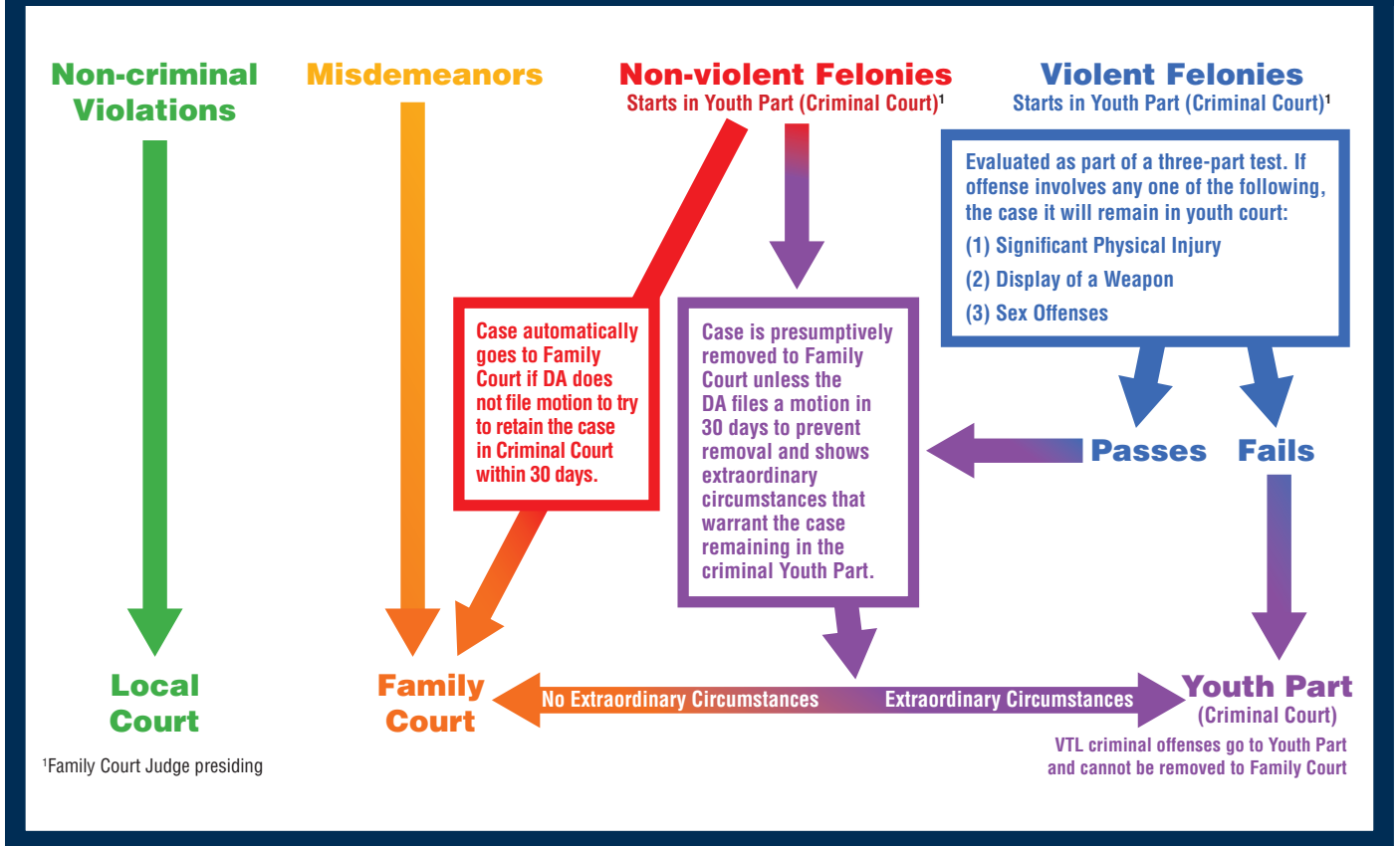
"Raising the Age for teenagers is about acknowledging that many teens make nonviolent mistakes because they are kids, and they often don't know better and can't fully appreciate the consequences of their actions," Assemblyman Heastie said. "If we truly want to reduce crime and increase safety, we need to give them a greater chance of turning their lives around and learning from their mistakes."

New York will no longer be one of only two states in the country to prosecute 16- and 17-year-old defendants in nonviolent cases as adults in Criminal Court. Under the new law, cases involving 16- and 17-year-old defendants would be adjudicated as follows:

- Civil violation charges (such as possession of small amounts of marijuana) would continue to be handled in the local adult courts;
- All misdemeanor charges will be handled in Family Court;
- All felony charges will begin in a newly established Youth Part of the Criminal Court, presided over by a Family Court judge, where alleged offenders will have access to additional intervention services and programming;
- Nonviolent felony charges will be transferred to Family Court, unless the district attorney demonstrates extraordinary circumstances that justify retaining the case in Criminal Court; and
- Higher level felony charges will remain in Criminal Court Youth Part subject to a three-part test weighing the seriousness of the offense to determine whether the case will be eligible for removal to Family Court.

Moreover, the criminal justice reforms also include allowing a defendant of any age who is convicted of certain nonviolent offenses to apply to the court for a sealing of their record after a 10-year waiting period following the completion of their sentence. This will allow people who were previously barred from employment to have a new lease on life.

# RAISE THE AGE FLOW CHART



## Investing in our schools and our children

The 2017-18 state budget increases education aid by \$1 billion for a total of \$25.7 billion, a 4.1 percent increase from last year's budget, reaffirming the Assembly Majority's unrelenting commitment to putting every student on their path to success. The budget increases Foundation Aid by \$700 million for a total of \$17.2 billion.

The budget includes a \$50 million increase in Community Schools Aid for a total of \$150 million. This funding allows schools to be converted into community schools that deliver valuable services to both students and families, including offering critical support to at-risk children, strengthening neighborhoods and preventing the schools from being taken over by the state.

Additionally, the budget provides:

- **\$817 million** in total funding for prekindergarten programs;
- **\$35 million** for after-school programs; and
- **\$5 million** to expand half-day and full-day prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds in high-need school districts.

## Supporting the My Brother's Keeper program

As the first state to implement former President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative, New York took a historic step to address the opportunity gaps facing young men of color and help them overcome these and other barriers to reach their full potential. The budget includes \$18 million for the program.

## Implementing the Excelsior Scholarship, supporting state colleges and universities

The 2017-18 state budget makes a substantial investment in SUNY and CUNY schools and helps expand access to higher education through scholarship and opportunity programs.

The state budget provides funding to establish the Excelsior Scholarship, a first-of-its-kind initiative to make SUNY and CUNY schools tuition-free for New Yorkers who earn less than \$125,000 annually when fully implemented. Students who attend a private college in New York and earn less than \$125,000 annually would also be eligible for a scholarship award of \$6,000.

## Investing in higher education

The budget also includes \$100 million for SUNY and \$60 million for CUNY in capital funding for maintenance and expansion purposes. Further, the state budget allocates \$450 million for SUNY and \$224 million for CUNY for critical maintenance. To help students and their families meet the rising, non-tuition costs of college, the budget includes \$8 million to help SUNY and CUNY develop online educational resources to help alleviate the high cost of textbooks for students.

To ensure community colleges can continue helping their students get ahead, the budget includes an increase of \$50 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student attending SUNY and CUNY schools, for a total of \$2,747 per FTE student. The budget also includes \$3.1 million for a new scholarship program for part-time students attending SUNY or CUNY community colleges so students with family or other responsibilities can finish school on their own schedules.

The budget also provides \$60 million for Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) and \$6.5 million for Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) labs.



Carl Heastie was joined on opening day of the Legislature by members of the NAACP and residents of the Northeast Bronx.



## Supporting college opportunity programs

The 2017-18 state budget restores \$23.8 million for opportunity programs:

- Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP): \$35.5 million, a restoration of \$5.9 million;
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP): \$32.2 million, a restoration of \$5.3 million;
- Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge program (SEEK): \$28.1 million, a restoration of \$4.6 million;
- Liberty Partnerships: \$18.4 million, a restoration of \$3 million;
- Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): \$15.8 million, a restoration of \$2.6 million; and
- Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP): \$11.9 million, a restoration of \$1.9 million.

## Protecting Medicaid and affordable care

The budget restores \$78.8 million in proposed reductions to Medicaid. Further, the budget restores \$10 million in cuts to

emergency rooms across New York State. It also provides \$10 million to support safety-net hospitals, which care for low-income and uninsured patients, \$10 million for critical access hospitals, which provide services in rural communities, and \$20 million for mental health facilities.

The state budget also provides funding for a variety of public health priorities, including:

- \$1 million for Community Health Advocates, which helps New Yorkers understand their health insurance and access the health care services they need;
- \$750,000 for Family Planning Services;
- \$500,000 for New Alternatives for Children;
- \$500,000 for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP);
- \$500,000 for the Diversity in Medicine Program; and
- \$400,000 for the Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC).

The 2017-18 state budget provides \$13.5 million to support long-term care, including restoring \$10 million to ensure couples do not lose their life savings in the event a spouse becomes ill and needs nursing home care.



Assemblyman Heastie meets with members of 1199 SEIU on their lobby day.

## Investing in affordable, supportive housing statewide

***“A secure, affordable place to live is vital to every family’s health and stability – particularly for children,” said Assemblyman Heastie.***

The budget provides \$2.5 billion for affordable housing and anti-homelessness initiatives, much of which was appropriated last year but could only be released once an agreement was reached to allocate these funds. The budget releases these funds for purposes including:

- \$1 billion for supportive housing to construct 6,000 or more units statewide;
- \$472 million for the Multifamily New Construction Program;
- \$200 million for New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) capital repairs;
- \$100 million for a 100% Affordable Housing program in New York City; and
- \$75 million for Mitchell-Lama preservation programs.

The budget increases funds for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) and Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORCs) for a total of \$2 million, which help keep seniors in the homes and neighborhoods where they have built friendships and support networks.

## Being Fair to Direct Care

Low wages have left direct care workers struggling to get by and care for their own families, forcing them to leave the field, creating a staffing crisis. After the Executive Budget did not have any funding for a direct care worker wage increase, the Assembly fought to ensure that the final state budget dedicated \$14 million in 2017-18 and \$146 million in 2018-19 to fund a living wage increase for direct care workers with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

***“Direct care workers are the backbone of our critical services sector and devote themselves to helping others,” said Assemblyman Heastie. “These hardworking and skilled individuals should not be forced to choose between their calling and making a living wage.”***

Direct care workers and direct support staff will receive a 6.5 percent raise during 2018.

## Expanding access to the legal system

The state budget provides \$10 million to expand immigrant legal defense services, as well as restores \$8.4 million to support legal services, including an additional:

- \$1.06 million in support for the New York State Defenders Association;
- \$600,000 in support for immigrant legal services; and
- \$500,000 for alternatives to incarceration (ATI) programming.

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## News from



**Carl E. Heastie**  
Member of  
Assembly

***“This year’s budget negotiations were contentious, but the Assembly Majority did not settle and fought for a budget that accomplishes our objectives and upholds our shared New York values.”***  
— Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie

