



COMMUNITY NEWS

from Assemblyman

J. GARY PRETLOW

89th Assembly District

SPRING 2021



This past year has been a difficult one for the state of New York. COVID-19 wreaked havoc on our communities, changed our way of life, uncovered deep inequities in our society, and left many unemployed and barely hanging on financially. Despite this, New York State is forging ahead to get our communities and our citizens back on track. The pace of vaccinations has been rapidly increasing and the American Rescue Plan has brought much-needed help to our state. Although the 2021-22 state budget will accelerate our progress as the state makes its comeback from the pandemic, there is always more to accomplish, and the New York State Assembly Majority has worked to craft a budget that continues to put families first.



EDUCATION

The State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021-22 Budget will include \$29.1 billion in funding to General Support for Public Schools (GSPS), an increase of \$3.1 billion, or 12 percent, over the 2020-21 School Year. Mount Vernon City School District will receive a total of \$112,088,304 in school aid which is an increase of \$11,072,819 (10.96%). Yonkers Public Schools will receive a total of \$345,653,897; an increase of \$46,169,241 (15.42%).

New York State has also received \$12 billion in federal funding to address pandemic-related educational costs. The budget also includes a \$105 million multi-year investment in prekindergarten, with \$90 million allocated to low- and medium-wealth school districts with low numbers of state-funded prekindergarten slots and \$15 million disbursed through a request for proposal process that will pay \$10,000 per kindergarten slot. The budget maintains \$250 million for Community School Aid and My Brother's Keeper programs will be allocated \$18 million for a total of \$108 million since its creation.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



The American Rescue Plan provided the State of New York approximately \$2.4 billion in federal childcare aid. The funds will ensure eligible families at or below 200 percent of the national poverty level receive subsidies distributed by local social services departments. This will expand access to priority groups that do not currently receive subsidies, limit copays, provide reimbursements for absences and make investments in workforce stabilization. The funding being allocated would also support childcare providers with stabilization grants to cover necessary expenses.

Also, for families to purchase food as well as eat healthy, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is available to help low-income working people, senior citizens, the disabled and others. You can check your eligibility at mybenefits.ny.gov.

HEALTH

The New York State Assembly 2021-2022 Fiscal Budget includes \$542 million in restorations to the Medicaid program. This includes \$204.4 million for hospitals and \$51.75 million for the Managed Long-Term Care (MLTC) Quality Pool. The plan consists of \$94 million to restore one percent across the board Medicaid claim cuts. In addition, a restoration of \$15.4 million in pharmacy reductions, which includes \$6.7 million for prescriber prevails provisions and \$8.7 million to maintain coverage for over-the-counter drugs. Additionally, the spending plan includes \$22.5 million for workforce recruitment and retention and \$32 million to support nursing homes, including registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants.



Also, please be aware that the open enrollment period of uninsured New Yorkers has been extended until December 31, 2021. Please go to the New York State Department of Health website for more information or to apply.

COVID-19



The COVID-19 pandemic has caused New York State to confront unimaginable losses. The pandemic has put to light the inequities in our healthcare system and the disparities in treatment and access to quality affordable healthcare. The approved budget makes essential investments in hard-hit communities throughout the state, including \$15 million in federal funding to support public education, communication efforts, and outreach to communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and those with vaccine hesitancy. The budget also provides \$10 million to support crisis intervention programs and providers disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

89TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS



Rent Relief

Approximately \$3 billion in combined federal and state dollars will be provided for rent and homeowner relief. In addition, included in the budget is \$100 million for a hardship fund, \$100 million to reduce homelessness, and \$575 million in federal homeowner relief, which includes a three-year, \$60 million commitment to fund the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP) to provide legal assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure.

New York State received \$2.3 billion in federal funding for Emergency Rental Assistance to aid eligible renters with rental arrears, utility and home energy costs or arrears, and future rent. The spending plan includes a proposal to get this rent relief funding to New Yorkers most in need quickly and efficiently.

It is important that we ensure crucial assistance reaches our most marginalized residents. For further information please go online to the New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program, call 1-844-691-7368 or you can contact my office and we will provide additional information.



Small Businesses

The enacted budget includes \$800 million for a new COVID-19 Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant program administered by the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC). The grants could be used to cover numerous business costs, including payroll, rent or mortgage payments, payments of local property or school taxes, insurance, utilities, personal protective equipment (PPE), heating, ventilation and air condition (HVAC), or other machine or equipment costs necessary for compliance with COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

The enacted budget also includes funding for restaurants impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. The budget provides \$25 million for the NY Restaurant Resiliency Grant program and \$35 million in tax credits for restaurants in areas affected by enhanced COVID-19 restrictions.

CLIP AND RETURN



Your questions or comments are important to me. If you have any concerns or issues you would like to discuss with me, please indicate and return to:

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Name:

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