



91st Assembly District  
Larchmont - Mamaroneck - New Rochelle - Port Chester - Rye Brook and Rye

March 30th

Dear Friends,

The first months of the legislative year are dominated by our work on the state budget. In January, Governor Hochul released her proposed budget. Review of the budget has taken place through joint Assembly/Senate budget hearings in Albany, and outreach with community groups, local governments, school districts, and businesses. Each year I also help organize our annual Westchester Assembly Delegation Budget Forum to provide local groups a platform to advise us on the budget.

This year I was appointed to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, which allowed me to participate in all the Albany-based budget hearings. I have always been fully engaged in the annual budget process, and the added role enhances my ability to advocate for our needs in Westchester.

The Assembly and Senate have now adopted our [one-house budget proposals](#) that are the basis for the budget negotiations with the governor.

Our Assembly budget proposal included many issues I have made a priority, such as supporting a \$2.7 billion increase in state aid to school districts and

continued support for the Foundation Aid improvements we made in recent years, increased affordability for paying for college, and my continued advocacy for environmental programs and new support to assist in flood mitigation and storm resiliency.

I have continued my advocacy for Special Act schools, including the schools serving blind or deaf students, such as New York School for the Deaf based here in Westchester.

The Assembly and Senate one-house proposals included a \$100 million increase to the state's array of clean water programs. The budget total has remained at \$500 million a year since 2017 while the burdens on local governments to address water infrastructure needs have increased. The Water Infrastructure Improvement Act grants I have championed comprise the largest portion of the statewide spending. Those grants have supported over 1100 projects statewide with over \$3 billion in grants. Westchester communities have received 53 grants receiving \$132 million in funding.

There has been increased state funding for New York State's assistance to local road and bridge programs. These programs are very important to local governments. As with clean water assistance, these grants reduce the burden on local property taxes.

The Assembly budget proposal includes programs to reduce taxes and costs to millions of taxpayers.

- **Low and middle-income tax cuts** to provide a one percent tax cut for certain taxpayers with incomes below \$323,000 benefiting approximately 8.3 million New Yorkers.

- **New York Works Tax Credit** creates a new program to consolidate the existing Empire State Child Tax Credit, the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the dependent exemption into one combined credit for most taxpayers.
- **LIFT Tax Credit** would apply to New Yorkers making up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level with at least one dependent, which would eliminate Personal Income Tax (PIT) completely for certain filers.
- **Inflation Refund Check** proposed in Governor Hochul's budget are included in the Assembly budget plan. Single earners with incomes below \$150,000 would receive \$300 and those filing jointly with incomes below \$300,000 would receive \$500, based on their 2023 tax filing status.

As Chair of the Assembly Science and Technology Committee, I was appointed to the Joint Budget Conference Committee on Economic Development, which plays a role in the budget negotiation process. I will continue to be an advocate for the technology and scientific research-based growth in New York's economy. Micro-chip and semi-conductor manufacturing has expanded in upstate New York and the Hudson Valley. The Empire AI Consortium is gaining new academic and private sector partners targeting AI research on public benefits.

Our budget includes additional proposals in health care, affordable housing, senior citizen services, and mass transit. The goal of the budget negotiation with the governor and the Senate is to arrive at a budget that addresses our needs and matches our expenditures with revenues.

Please continue to share your thoughts on budget issues or reach out on any

matter where I can be of assistance. My office number is 914-939-7028.

Warm Regards,



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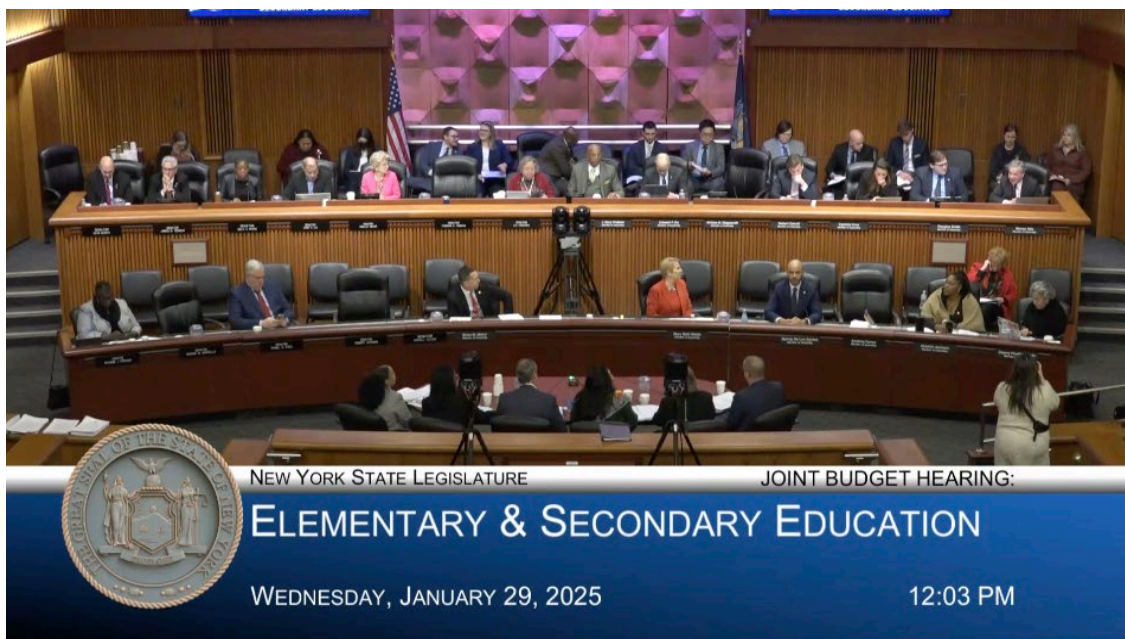
### **Senate Assembly Joint State Budget Hearings**



The Joint Senate Assembly State Budget hearings provide an important opportunity to question state agency heads and to drill down on issues of concern. Some of the issues I highlighted with questions include discussions with [SUNY Chancellor John King](#) on the growth of the AI Consortium, the [Honorable Joseph Zayas, Chief Administrative Judge](#), New York State Office of Court Administration on community resources needed by problem-solving courts like Judge Jared Rice's Opportunity Youth Part in New Rochelle and the best model to grow these services, and [Janno Lieber](#).

[Chairman and CEO, Metropolitan Transportation Authority](#) on the importance of modernization and on-time performance in growing ridership. You can view these questions and responses by clicking on the witness name above.

You can also view the Westchester Assembly Delegation State Budget Forum where we heard from over 40 speakers from a variety of local non-profit and advocacy groups on their budget needs and concerns. You can view this annual forum [HERE](#).



## **Budget Forum with Non-Profit Westchester**



As part of the state budget process, the Westchester Delegation meets with the leaders of our county not-for-profit organizations. The event is organized by Not-For-Profit Westchester and was hosted at the offices of the Westchester Library System in Tarrytown. The meeting is especially valuable in learning of the latest challenges facing not-for-profit organizations and hearing about the latest state budget priorities and concerns.

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## **Con Ed Rate Increase Highlights Need for Reform**

I have been active in opposing the current Con Ed rate increase application. Through our Assembly Westchester Delegation joint filing with the Public

Service Commission, I have opposed the Con Ed application in the rate proceeding before the commission.

In February I joined my colleagues in the Assembly and Senate and over 100 residents for a White Plains rally opposing the proposed the Con Edison proposed rate hikes ([view press release](#)) and supporting legislation I co-sponsor in the Assembly that would reform the rules that determine what costs are allowable charges to consumers in rate application cases. Senator Shelley Mayer is the lead Senate sponsor of the bill and organized the rally.

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**Opposing Racist Actions by the Federal Government in Censoring Stories of Black War Heroes**



This week I joined Albany area legislators to denounce the removal by the US Department of Defense of WWI hero Sergeant Henry Johnson from government websites. It is an outrage that the federal government is removing all historical references to individuals of color from federal websites.

Our press conference was held on National Medal of Honor Day. The federal government's effort to censor the history of our heroes based upon race is a disgrace. Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Henry Johnson is one of those heroes who has been targeted by the Department of Defense.

You can listen to the audio and view the WAMC story at their Web site.

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### **NYS Office For New Americans**

The New York State Office for New Americans (ONA) was created in 2012 to welcome immigrants and to help them in achieving their American Dream.

Through its statewide network of community-based providers, ONA assists all new Americans in accessing and navigating a variety of free services and supports their inclusion as an integral part of New York State's diverse cultural fabric.

#### **NEW AMERICANS HOTLINE**

1-800-566-7636

Monday-Friday 9AM to 8PM (ET)

<https://dos.ny.gov/office-new-americans>

**Legal Help:** Answers to immigration & naturalization questions. Referrals to free legal help and programs.

**In Your Community:** Information about nearby Opportunity Centers. Report fraud or scams against immigrant communities.

**200+ Languages:** Calls are confidential & anonymous.

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## Science and Technology at SUNY



Earlier in March, SUNY representatives from different schools came to Albany to discuss science and technology research projects based at SUNY campuses throughout the state. Featured were professors and technology leaders from the Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, and Stony Brook SUNY campuses. I am pictured here with University of Buffalo President Dr. Satish K. Tripathi. Last year I brought the Assembly Science and Technology Committee to Buffalo for a series of meetings, including an extensive session with Buffalo's AI team. Our committee supports these important research efforts.

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## REAL ID Requirements for May 2025



A REAL ID is a federally compliant DMV-issued driver license, learner permit, or non-driver ID that will be required to board a domestic flight (within the U.S.) or enter certain federal buildings starting in May 2025, unless you have a valid passport.

Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act establishes minimum security standards for state-issued driver licenses, permits, and ID cards. The Act also prohibits federal agencies, like the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), from accepting cards for official purposes from states that do not meet these standards.

### [How to Apply](#)

A REAL ID is optional and is **not** needed for the following:

- Being licensed to drive
- Voting or registering to vote

- Entering Federal facilities that do not require a person to present identification
- Applying for or receiving Federal benefits
- Accessing health or life-preserving services (including hospitals and health clinics), law enforcement, or constitutionally protected activities (including a defendant's access to court proceedings)
- Participating in law enforcement proceedings or investigations

[Learn more about how to get a REAL ID in the DMV's Youtube video.](#)



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**E-FILE YOUR TAXES**  
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[tax.ny.gov](https://tax.ny.gov)



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