



NEWS *From* Assemblymember **John T. McDonald III**

Spring 2018

Dear Neighbors:

I am proud to represent Albany in the New York State Assembly. This year's state budget builds on years of progress for Albany and the Capital Region and offers a forward-looking plan for the future of the communities of the Capital Region. This budget update includes some of the highlights of this year's budget on some of the most pressing issues facing our region.

John T. McDonald III

Member of Assembly, 108th District

Capital City Funding. Albany residents rely on dependable city services. For the second straight year, the Assembly included capital city aid for the City of Albany in the budget resulting in a final allocation of \$12 million this year. Once again, this is new funding that is not borrowed against future payments to the city through 19-A payments. In the most difficult budget year in our tenure in the Assembly, this is a tremendous achievement, Assemblymember Patricia Fahy and I are grateful for the advocacy and leadership of Speaker Carl Heastie, along with the strong support of Governor Cuomo and Senator Neil Breslin.

Foundation Aid / K-12 Funding. Education is fundamental to a lifetime of success. The spending plan includes \$26.7 billion in school aid, which is an increase of \$1 billion or 3.9 percent over the 2017-18 School Year. Within the spending plan also is \$618 million for Foundation Aid to help fund the State's obligation to our neediest schools. The plan also includes \$22.3 million for Advantage Afterschool. This includes \$15 million in additional funding for Pre-K.

Wadsworth and Public Health Labs. The Wadsworth and public health labs are critical public health research facilities, responsible for combating infectious diseases, testing newborns for preventable illnesses, and testing public water supplies among many more essential functions. The newly passed state budget will invest another \$600 million to consolidate and upgrade the state health science labs, combined with a \$150 million investment last year. This marks one of the largest economic development projects with public support in the Capital Region in recent history.

Upstate Transit Funding. Access to transit is critical for economic growth Upstate and is essential for connecting people to economic opportunity. The budget allocates \$16.8 million for operating funds as well as a \$20 million increase for transit capital projects. This marks a significant win for the Capital Region, and signals continued progress for transit funding between Upstate and Downstate.

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Assemblymembers McDonald, Fahy, and Brindisi in the Assembly Chamber.



Assemblemember John T. McDonald III with Aminata Toumbou, Albany High School Student and NYS YMCA Youth Governor.

Secure Choice Savings Plan. Saving for retirement can be a challenge, which is why New York State is expanding options for those looking to save. A major highlight of the budget is the new New York State Secure Choice Savings retirement program for private-sector employees. The program, administered by a seven member program board and chaired by the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance, will allow New Yorkers to better prepare and save for retirement through an automatic enrollment payroll deduction IRA, a major win for seniors and small businesses.



Assemblemember McDonald, NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, Assemblemember Patricia Fahy.

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Workforce Development. The budget invests in workforce development training which is vital for the many small businesses and job seekers that I frequently hear from. We should be investing in our people and that investment will create a skilled workforce and a career path for many. By investing in workforce development we are providing opportunities for jobs and a pathway to success for our residents. The 2018-19 state budget allocates \$1.67 million for local economic development initiatives.

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