



JEFF GALLAHAN
Assemblyman, 131st District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Committee on Racing and Wagering
COMMITTEES
Aging
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
Correction
Local Governments
Tourism, Parks, Arts and
Sports Development

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Dear Neighbor,

As your assemblyman, having my finger on the pulse of our community continues to be my top priority. My mission in the New York State Assembly remains unchanged: to serve you by standing up for common-sense policies that support our families, protect our values, and make New York a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Each year, I make it a priority to be visible, accessible, and engaged throughout the 131st Assembly District. I firmly believe good government starts with listening to the people we represent. You deserve a government that is transparent, responsive, and accountable, and throughout my time as your assemblyman, I have worked to make sure your voice is heard in the Capitol and state government remains accountable to the hardworking taxpayers it serves.

Going into this year's legislative session, my top concerns were the challenges facing young families and senior citizens, as the margins for making ends meet continue to shrink and New York continues to lose residents at an alarming rate.¹ I believe our hardworking families deserve relief from the growing burden of taxes, mandates, and regulations imposed by state government, and our seniors deserve the opportunity to continue living in the communities they have called home for decades.²

This year marked my sixth state budget process, and unfortunately, it resulted in the latest budget enacted in the past 16 years. It was passed 57 days after the constitutionally mandated April 1st start of the new fiscal year.³ Some people ask why that matters. The answer is simple: Our school districts and local municipalities depend on state funding to build their own budgets. Local officials were forced to make important financial decisions without knowing exactly how much in state funding they would receive.⁴ School districts asked taxpayers to vote on their budgets without knowing how much state aid they would receive.⁵ The position the state continues to put our local communities in is unacceptable.

One area where we made meaningful progress this year was reforming Tier 6 of the NYS Pension system. For years, Tier 6 has made it more difficult to recruit and retain workers in critical public service careers by requiring longer service requirements, high individual contributions, and less competitive retirement benefits than previous tiers. The reforms made are especially important as New York faces a severe staffing crisis in public safety.⁶ Today, our state is roughly 4,600 correction officers short, forcing remaining officers to work excessive overtime and placing additional strain on already understaffed correctional facilities.⁷ Police departments and sheriff's departments are facing many of the same recruitment challenges.⁶ These reforms are an important step toward attracting new employees, retaining experienced staff, and strengthening the workforce needed to keep our communities safe.

Another positive change was the rollback of portions of New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), including a delay of the electric school bus mandate.⁸ While I believe delaying the implementation timelines for the CLCPA and the electric school bus mandate is a step in the right direction, these changes do not go far enough. The requirement that every school district, including those in rural

communities, transition to an all-electric bus fleet by 2035 was never realistic, and neither is the new 2040 deadline. These mandates should have been permanently repealed to protect taxpayers and ratepayers from the significant costs associated with compliance.

Despite several legislative gains this session, I remain deeply concerned about the unsustainable growth of our state budget. When I first took office in 2021, the budget was approximately \$209 billion.⁹ In just five years, it has grown to more than \$268.5 billion, an increase of \$59.5 billion.¹⁰ If we are serious about addressing the cost-of-living crisis facing New Yorkers, we must rein in excessive spending, cut taxes, and eliminate burdensome regulations that make it harder for families, seniors, farmers, and small businesses to succeed.

That is why I introduced Assembly Bill A.6089, legislation creating the Commission on Government Efficiency (COGE). The commission would consist of eight bipartisan members and would be tasked with conducting a comprehensive review of state spending to identify waste, duplication, inefficiency, and programs that no longer deliver value to taxpayers.¹¹ Each year, the commission would submit recommendations to the governor and Legislature outlining opportunities to streamline government, improve accountability, and reduce unnecessary spending.¹¹ New Yorkers deserve to know their tax dollars are being spent responsibly, and I believe a thorough review of state government is long overdue.

From time to time, when I get the opportunity, I like to answer the phones in my office. One issue that consistently comes up is concern over New York's energy policies. Whether it's rising utility bills or large-scale solar and wind projects being proposed in rural communities, many residents feel their voices are being ignored.

I share those same concerns. The RAPID Act, which was signed into law in 2024, stripped local communities of their authority over the permitting of large-scale energy projects and transferred that power to state government through the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES).¹² As a result of that law's passing, I introduced Assembly Bill A.5908, legislation that would restore local municipalities' authority to have the final say on large-scale solar and wind projects within their communities.¹³ Local governments know their communities best, and residents deserve to have their voice heard when projects of this scale have the potential to permanently impact their landscape, infrastructure, and quality of life. Decisions like these should be made locally, not by state agencies.

While this year's legislative session was not as fruitful as I feel they have been in the past, and there's no doubt that we still have a long way to go, I remain committed to being part of the solution. I'll continue fighting for a more efficient government, safer communities, and a stronger Upstate New York.

Thank you for the honor of representing you in the New York State Assembly.

Sincerely,



Jeff Gallahan
Member of the Assembly
131st District

¹ News10, "New York outmigration trends" — news10.com/capitol/new-york-outmigration-trends/

² Newsweek, "Map Shows Which States Have Highest Tax Burden" — newsweek.com/map-shows-which-states-have-highest-tax-burden-11768265

³ NY State Senate, "New York State Budget" — nysenate.gov/new-york-state-budget

⁴ New York Focus, "The State Budget Is Late. Now Mamdani's Might Be, Too" — nysfocus.com/2026/04/25/mamdani-late-budget

⁵ News10, "Why local school budget votes may be tricky without NYS budget" — news10.com/news/albany-county/why-local-school-budget-votes-may-be-tricky-without-nys-budget/

⁶ Spectrum News, "New York state police departments face staffing shortages" — spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/rochester/news/2026/03/27/new-york-state-police-departments-face-staffing-shortages

⁷ FingerLakes1, "State prisons still short 4,600 officers" — fingerlakes1.com/2026/02/13/state-prisons-still-short-4600-officers/

⁸ 2026 Transportation, Economic Development, and Environmental Conservation Budget Bill (A.3008)

⁹ 2021 Budget Bills ¹⁰ 2026 Budget Bills ¹¹ Assembly Bill A.6089 ¹² Assembly Bill A.8808-C (2024) ¹³ Assembly Bill A.5908