

ASSEMBLYMAN WILL BARCLAY

2013 SESSION REVIEW

2013 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- Impact of the 2013-2014 Budget
- Session Highlights
- Future Priorities



Budget Misses Opportunity to Improve Business Climate, but did Fund Local Highways, Education and Agriculture

Although on time, this year's budget contained some good and some bad. On the good side of the ledger, this budget provided for our local communities in many ways, such as increasing funding for our local highways and bridges by \$75 million. We also increased education aid by \$936.6 million. Another positive in the budget was that aid was maintained for local agricultural programs, helping to assist farmers with many aspects of operation—from growing produce to manufacturing value-added products. This will help create and keep jobs in the region.

Unfortunately, this year's budget was not all positive. On the negative side of the ledger, this budget did little to improve our state's business climate and failed to provide any direct tax relief to Central New Yorkers. To the contrary, the budget extended energy taxes for all residents. It also contained drastic cuts for programs that serve the developmentally disabled, and for successful cancer screening programs. In all, while this budget did contain some positives, it was not a revolutionary budget that is going to move our state in a new and positive direction.

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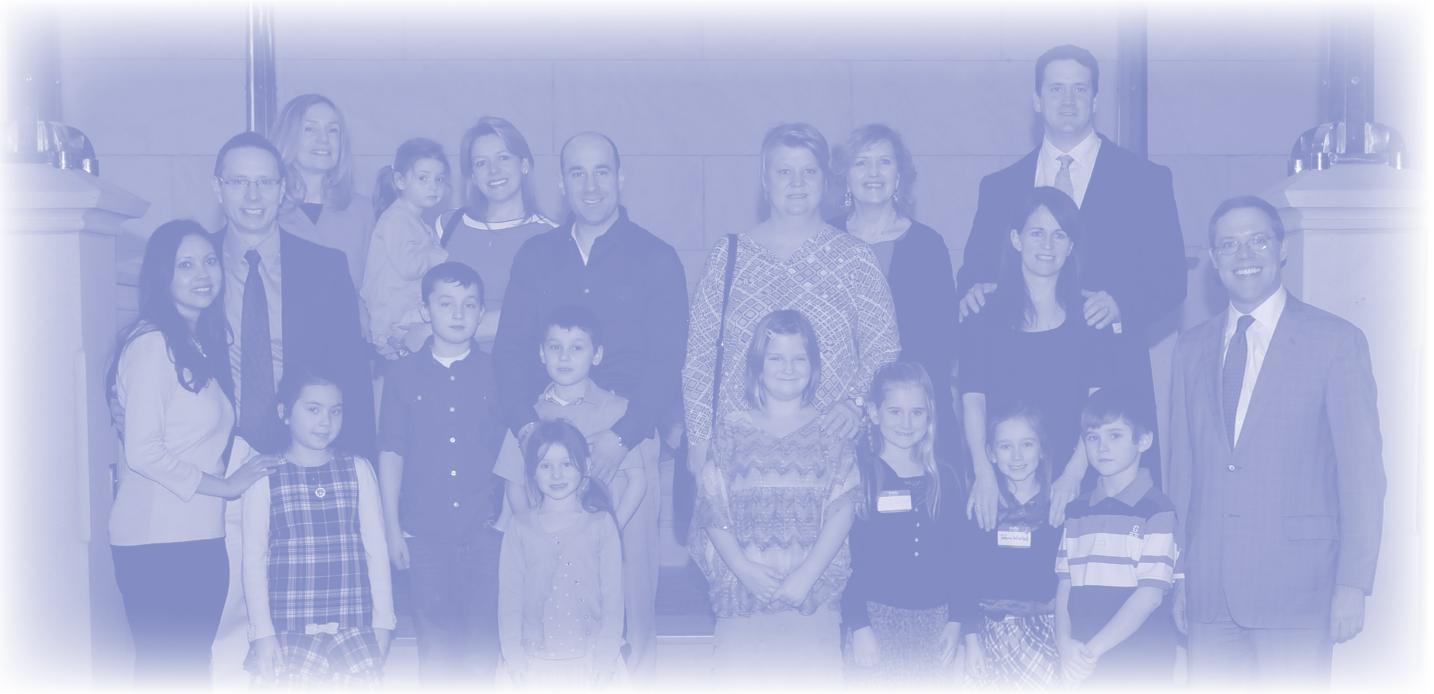
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IMPROVEMENTS TO SAFETY, ETHICS, BUSINESS CLIMATE NEEDED

While the budget boosted funding for our local infrastructure, schools and agriculture trade, there is still more we must do to enhance the quality of life for our residents and communities. Here is an outline of some of the things I have been working on:

- On May 28, I held a press conference to introduce comprehensive legislation to address and combat the use and abuse of synthetic drugs. This bill improves laws related to synthetic drug use and sale, increases penalties, penalizes chemical swapping and mislabeling, among other proposed changes.
- I introduced legislation that would create an Ethics Committee independent of the influence of Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. In the wake of the recent investigation into disgraced former Assemblyman Vito Lopez and Speaker Silver's mishandling of sexual harassment and abuse in the Assembly, this bi-partisan committee is necessary. My legislation requires that any complaints made against an Assembly member or a staff member would have to be referred to the committee, which would have the power to investigate the claim or defer the complaint to another appropriate investigative entity. The committee will also be able to impose various penalties or, in certain cases, recommend penalties be imposed by vote of the full Assembly.
- We need to prohibit the use of welfare benefits to pay for illicit materials. That's why I am sponsoring the Public Assistance Integrity Act. This would limit fraud and abuse in the system and protect both taxpayers and those who use the system as intended.





Local Career Centers Provide Access to Jobs, Employees

Our local economy is finally making its way out of a recession thanks in part to the food processing industry and, especially, value-added dairy products. According to the Department of Labor, the yogurt industry continues to be a source for many jobs throughout the Upstate region.

In fact, fruit, vegetables, chicken, breads, and other milk-based products continue to be in high demand. Fortunately, our region will continue to benefit from these market demands as a result of local processing facilities that are being built in the region or expanding.

Many local residents, however, continue to look for work. If you're on the job search or want to keep informed about openings throughout the region, visit Oswego Workforce New York in Fulton, CNY Works in Syracuse, or The Work Place in Watertown. These agencies are managed as part of the State Department of Labor and are federally funded.

Those on the job hunt can find job listings, access to computers, resume-building help, information about careers and additional training, as well as access to information on apprenticeships such as bricklayers, plumbing, construction and carpentry. Health care recruitment is ongoing. Small employers often post openings as well.

Local career center information:

Oswego County-- Oswego County Workforce NY, 200 North 2nd Street, Fulton, NY 13069; (315) 591-9000; yourcareerconnection.org.

Jefferson County--The Work Place, 1000 Coffeen Street, Watertown, NY 13601; (315) 782-9252; co.jefferson.ny.us/index.aspx?page=74.

Onondaga County-- CNY Works, 443 North Franklin St., Lower Level, Syracuse, NY 13204; (315) 473-8250; cnyworks.com.

*Food
processing
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S.A.F.E. Act Changes

The state passed the SAFE Act earlier this year. I voted against it, as it did little to make our communities safer and, instead, penalized law-abiding citizens and caused confusion. On Feb. 28, thousands gathered in Albany to rally against the law. Unfortunately, the law will not be repealed in the near future. There are lawsuits pending, which question whether the law infringes on Constitutional rights. For now, these were the marginal changes that were made within the budget that:

- Suspended the requirement that magazines can only have a capacity to be loaded with 7 rounds or less. Going forward, magazines can be purchased that have the capacity to be loaded with up to 10 rounds. However, the law still requires, other than in certain specific circumstances, that magazines can only be loaded with 7 rounds or less regardless of whether they have a 10 round capacity.
- Exempted active law enforcement so they can possess high-capacity magazines, assault weapons and weapons on school grounds. When the law initially passed in January, police officers found they would be in violation of the SAFE Act for possessing high-capacity weapons or from carrying rifles, shotguns or firearms on school grounds when the law took effect.
- A separate amendment to the SAFE Act exempts qualified law enforcement so they can possess high-capacity magazines and assault weapons issued in the course of their official duties and owned at the time of retirement as long as they meet certain requirements.

BASIC STAR EXEMPTION CHANGES

People with the Basic STAR exemption—the state’s School Tax Relief program—must reapply. This budget puts the State Department of Taxation and Finance in charge of applications, rather than having people apply at their local assessor’s office. Primarily, this change was made to prevent fraud. There were several cases in which property owners who owned property in two different municipalities applied for the STAR exemption for more than one property. The STAR exemption is only intended to be used for the property owner’s primary residence. The state has mailed out letters to notify all residents who are currently enrolled in the Basic STAR program. Those seniors with Enhanced STAR apply annually and must meet certain income requirements. That process will not change. Only those with Basic STAR will be affected. To reapply, visit www.tax.ny.gov