



May 3, 2023

Greetings –

On Tuesday, the Legislature approved the State’s \$229 billion budget for the 2023-24 Fiscal Year. **By including the core provisions of my legislation - the Build Public Renewables Act (BPRA) - as well as banning fossil fuel infrastructure in new construction, this budget is a major win in the fight against climate change.**

The Budget also includes *record* education funding, new funding to address the migrant crisis, funding to strengthen mental health programs, an increase to the minimum wage, and dedicated funding to stabilize the MTA among other important initiatives. I am proud to have also secured, for a third consecutive budget, \$250,000 in this year’s State budget for dyslexia evaluation and intervention services for underserved communities in New York City provided by the [Promise Project](#).

I am tremendously proud to see the Build Public Renewables Act (BPRA), legislation that originated in my office four years ago, become law, and grateful to all the advocates, especially the Public Power NY coalition that were vital to pushing it through. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that the practice of including policy initiatives that are not directly budget related greatly complicates the task of reaching a budget agreement. It also hurts the cause of transparency in government, something that is already a grave challenge given the size and complexity of a state like New York.

This year the fact that the budget was adopted a month past the April 1 statutory deadline was due in no small part to the Governor’s insistence on changing New York’s criminal justice laws. The legislature rejected the Governor’s demand to weaken requirements regarding evidence that prosecutors must share with defense attorneys but did ultimately approve granting judges greater discretion in setting bail. I have been vocal in expressing my view that we should not be criminalizing being poor and I fear that this change may result in more people in pre-trial detention, the very thing that the 2019 bail reforms, which I supported, were intended to address. Unfortunately, the Governor resorted to fearmongering to push her agenda, despite the fact that New York City is the safest big city in America. Just as we needed to rely on the evidence in assessing the 2019 bail reforms, we now will have to be sure to understand the impacts of the changes passed in the budget. This issue notwithstanding, the budget includes many initiatives that address the needs of New Yorkers including those most in need. Below are some areas and actions I would like to highlight.

Budget Highlights

This year's budget includes the core provisions of my bill, the Build Public Renewables Act, which represents **the most significant Green New Deal legislation passed in the nation to date**. It is clear that to successfully fight climate change the public sector must take a more active role in renewable energy generation and supply. Accordingly, this legislation empowers the New York Power Authority (NYPA), to build, own, and operate renewable energy projects according to a strategic plan developed every two years. "Peaker plants" in New York City, which are some of the dirtiest plants in the State and disproportionately located in disadvantaged communities, will be phased out by 2030. NYPA will further provide bill credits to electricity consumers in disadvantaged communities and support workforce training in renewable energy. The legislation also includes labor standards to ensure good paying union jobs and prevent job dislocation that might result from the transition away from fossil fuels.



January 21st, 2022

By Zach Williams

Public power supporters amping up the pressure on Kathy Hochul

"Carroll and Assembly Member Marcela Mitaynes were among the people arrested at a recent climate action protest in New York City."



Photo by Elliott Golden

The budget also included key elements of the “All Electric Buildings Act” requiring new buildings of less than seven stories to be all electric beginning in 2026 and all other buildings to be all electric by 2029. These provisions combined should make it much more feasible for the State to meet the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

Education

The budget provides a **record total of \$34 billion** in general support to public schools statewide, an increase of \$3 billion. Included in this is an increase of \$2.6 billion to fully fund Foundation Aid for a total \$24 billion, the most ever provided in the history of New York State. The Legislature rejected the Governor’s proposal to lift the cap on charter schools, although 14 defunct charters (zombies) in New York City will be reauthorized.

The Assembly successfully fought to reject SUNY and CUNY tuition increases for New York State undergraduates and the budget provides \$1.1 billion in capital funding for CUNY and \$1.9 billion for SUNY.

Public Transportation

The budget shores up the MTA finances by including a one-time payment of \$300 million and generating an anticipated \$1.1 billion in new revenue from an increase to the Payroll Mobility Tax (PMT). The PMT applies to businesses with payrolls of over \$1.75 million in New York City and suburbs served by the MTA, but the increase in the budget from .34% to .6% applies to New York City only. [As I have stated previously, I believe this to be bad policy - the suburbs should pay their fair share.](#) I also am unhappy to see a fare increase, even one that stays below the \$2.90 level the MTA initially sought. The best way to generate revenue for the MTA is to improve the quality of service including the frequency. The budget does include funding for a pilot to decrease wait times on some lines and a short-term pilot for one free bus line per borough. This is a fine start, but we need to be more ambitious and find a way to get to “six-minute service” system-wide.

Supporting Workers and Families

The budget mandates an increase in the minimum wage in NYC and downstate to \$16 and the rest of the state to \$15 beginning in 2024 and then to \$17 and \$16 by Jan 1, 2026. Starting in 2027 these wages will be indexed to inflation.

The budget includes \$1 billion to New York City to address the needs of migrants arriving in the City. This is vitally important. New York should remain a beacon of hope to those seeking to improve their lives and fleeing violence and oppression, but the City is hard pressed to deal with this crisis without State and federal help. **We have many migrants in the 44th Assembly District in need of clothes and other essentials. See the bottom of this email for how you can help.**

The budget also includes \$1 billion to strengthen mental health programs throughout the State including both funds for services as well as capital funds for the creation of new residential units for those in need.

Funding mental health services is the right thing to do and should help reduce the number of mentally unwell on our streets.

Another significant investment in human needs is the expansion of the State's Child Tax Credit to include families with children under four. This will put cash in the pockets of low- and moderate-income households that are home to approximately 791,000 children.

Still Much to be Done

Despite all that was accomplished in the budget there is still much to be done. With the delay in reaching an agreement, we are now facing an even more daunting timeline than usual to get legislation passed before the session closes in June. One of the biggest shortcomings in the budget is the failure to take on New York's housing crisis more substantially through measures to increase production and safeguard tenants. I will continue to advocate for and work with my colleagues for meaningful action on both fronts. I also have a number of legislative priorities through bills I am the prime sponsor on, first and foremost of which is my dyslexia and literacy related bills, as well as bills to reduce utility rates, support solar projects in New York City, and support biodiversity in the State through wildlife crossings. More details and updates on these and other legislation will be coming in the weeks ahead.

Free Flood Barriers and Rain Barrels

After last weekend's exceptional rainfall, I heard many in my district experienced more basement flooding. In partnership with NYC DEP, I have secured a supply of FREE HydroBarrier Ultra brand flood barriers and Rain Barrels to help mitigate basement flooding.

Flood Barriers protect areas where water pools around basement doors and windows and are an excellent alternative to sandbags. The flood barriers are now in my District office at 416 7th Avenue and ready for pick up. If you would like one or two for your home, [please sign up here and we will reserve them for you while supplies last](#).

You can also [sign up for free rain barrels](#). Delivery will be sometime between the end of May and mid-July. We will alert you by email once we know when they will be available for local pick up, as we have done for the past several years.

Urgent Need for Asylum Seeking Families

New York City has experienced a sharp increase in asylum seekers into the local shelter system and these children are arriving in our local schools without basic supplies. Until these new New Yorkers get on their feet with jobs and housing, let's lend a hand with the generosity and kindness Brooklynites are known for. See flyer below for the requested items. Drop off at my office – 416 7th Avenue Monday – Friday from 9:30am-4:30pm.

EMERGENCY CALL

to Help Asylum-Seeking Families



New York City has experienced a sharp increase in asylum seekers into the local shelter system and these children are arriving in our local schools without basic supplies. Until these new New Yorkers get on their feet with jobs and housing, let's lend a hand with the generosity and kindness Brooklynites are known for.

Please donate as soon as you can, Assemblymember Robert Carroll will accept donations at his office at 416 7th Avenue, bet. 13th & 14th Streets.

Suggested items include:

Seasonal clothing
Shoes, especially sneakers
New socks and underwear
Raincoats and rain boots
Water bottles, reusable
Toiletries, baby wipes

Fanny packs and small purses
Granola bars, healthy snacks,
non-perishable food,
Kleenex and Paper towels, Toys
Boys and girls sneakers and sandals
Toothbrushes and toothpaste

First aid kits
Umbrellas and rain jackets
Sports bottles, Balls
Feminine products
Diapers

DROP OFF ITEMS
MON - FRI.
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

The donations we receive will be brought to local public schools where items can be distributed directly to the families in need. **Please no large toys or accessories like cribs or car seats, the families are in small hotel rooms and do not have space.*



ROBERT CARROLL

ASSEMBLYMEMBER // 44TH DISTRICT



If you have any concerns about these or any other legislative or community matter please email me at carrollr@nyassembly.gov or call (718) 788-7221.

-Bobby

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