



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ASSEMBLYMEMBER
RODNEYSE BICHOTTE
the
NYS Legislature and Governor Cuomo
ENACT
FY 2020-21 Budget**

(Albany, NY) - On Friday, **April 3, 2020**, **Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte** along with colleagues in the Legislature passed the budget which was signed into law by **Governor Andrew Cuomo** enacting the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget.

We are in the midst of a public health crisis that most of us could never have imagined. And, while this coronavirus pandemic has uprooted our daily lives and put the economy in a state of disarray, the Assembly Majority remains committed to helping each and every New Yorker get back on their feet and overcome the obstacle that have been placed before them.

As expected, completing this budget was a challenge. We attempted to restore critical items while balancing a steep incline of the budget gap currently projected at **\$6.1 billion**. Below are the budget bills followed by some highlights of the budget.

- [A9503C](#) regarding aid to localities
- [A9505B](#) regarding state public protection and general government budget
- [A9506B](#) regarding state education, labor, housing and family assistance
- [A9508B](#) regarding state transportation, economic development and environmental conservation

New York State Fiscal Year 2020-21 Enacted Budget Highlights

PROS

Education:

- **\$27.9 billion** in education funding (increase of \$93.2 million), including:
 - \$500,000 increase of the reimbursable cap for New York City **Transportation after 4 p.m.**
 - \$848 million for **pre-K funding**
 - \$94.1 million in aid to **public libraries**
 - \$10 million to increase **mental health services in schools**

Higher Education:

- **\$2.1 million** to **SUNY** and **\$1.7 million** to **CUNY** for child care centers
- **\$27 million** for the Jose Peralta New York State **DREAM Act**
- **\$385,000** for training programs for teachers providing bilingual or multilingual education

Housing:

- **\$15.5 billion** increase of bonding authority of New York City Housing Development Corp (\$1 billion increase)
- **\$10 million** allocated from the Mortgage Insurance fund to support the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP)
- **\$18.2 million** for Neighborhood and Rural Preservation programs

Human Services:

- **\$19.76 million** in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding
- **\$832 million** allocated for child care subsidies
- **\$29.08 million** for programs administered by the Office of Children and Family Services
- **\$2.9 million** to restore funding for programs administered by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) for various programs
- **\$58.6 million** for Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs

Medicaid Redesign Team II (MRT II):

- **\$300 million** in restorations and modifications based on recommendations from the Medicaid Redesign Team II, including:
 - \$94 million to reduce proposed **across-the-board reduction** for most **Medicaid** providers
 - \$4.8 million to maintain the **adult day transportation** service delivery model
 - \$70 million to restore **Indigent Care Pool** funding for public hospitals
 - \$3 million restored for supplemental payments to ambulance providers
 - Expands the list of authorized providers that may use **telehealth** services

Local Funding:

- **\$761.1 million** for local government assistance (increase of \$10.49 million over the executive proposal)

Unemployment Insurance:

- **\$43 billion** for various state and federal unemployment insurance benefits to support increased claims currently taking place, and **\$1.05 billion** for administrative costs

Mass Transit Authority

- **\$3 billion** toward the \$54.8 billion 2020-24 MTA Capital Plan (total of \$20.9 billion)
- Requires New York City and New York state to **pay \$3 billion each** to the MTA to support 2020-24 MTA Capital Plan
- MTA given **access to funds in its lockbox** temporarily to offset the recent revenue loss
- **\$25 million** for the MTA School Fare Subsidy

Other Transportation:

- **\$438 million** for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs)
- **\$20 million** for electric buses
- Authorization of the use of **e-bikes and e-scooters** statewide
- **\$100 million** each for Pave NY and Bridge NY infrastructure projects

Environmental Conservation:

- **\$300 million** for Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)
- **\$500 million** for clean water infrastructure grants to municipalities as part of the Clean Water Infrastructure Act
- **Ban polystyrene foam food containers and loose-fill packaging** effective January 1, 2022
- **\$3 billion** for the Environmental Bond Act of 2020 which goes toward preservation and restoration of the environment

Agriculture:

- **\$31.77 million** for agricultural aid to localities

Veterans:

- **\$2.02 million** for the Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project
- **\$1.09 million** in funding for various veteran's programs

Criminal Justice and Legal Services:

- **\$4.2 million** restored for Legal Services Assistance Fund (LSAF)
- **\$16.1 million** for various legal services
- **Expand the definition of "serious offense"** to include **out-of-state crimes** equivalent to New York crimes when determining whether a person is disqualified for a **gun license in New York**

- **\$80 million** (\$40 million each for SFY 2021 and 2022) for increased costs of discovery implementation

State Board Elections:

- **\$21.8 million** in anticipation of federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) grant funding for enhanced election technology and security
- **\$16 million** for expenses related to implementing online voter registration and the state's 20% match for HAVA funds

BUDGET POLICIES



Video: Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte in Assembly Chamber debating on prevailing wages with Assemblymember Harry Bronson

Prevailing Wages:

Requires payment of prevailing wages on construction work paid for in its entirety or in part out of public funds, and where the amount of such funds is at least 30% of total construction costs and such costs are over \$5 million



***Video: Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte** in Assembly Chamber commenting on Budget Policies: Bail Reform; Flavored E-Cigarettes/Vaping; Gestational Surrogacy; and MRT*

Gestational Surrogacy:

Authorized **paid** Gestational Surrogacy arrangement, which includes protection for surrogates, protection for intended family, and provides financial assistance for intended family. Effective February 15, 2021.

Flavored E-Cigarettes / Vaping:

The sale of flavored vaping products is prohibited unless approved by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration). Certain restrictions have been put in place such as:

- prohibits display of advertisement for tobacco and vapor products within **500 feet** of New York City **schools**
- prohibits sale of tobacco products in pharmacies and retail establishments with a pharmacy inside
- establishes a prevention, control and educational awareness campaign developed by the Department of Health and the state Education Department
- increased monetary penalties for retail dealers

Public Campaign Finance:

Provides optional public financing of campaigns for statewide and state legislative offices, and constitutional convention delegates. Donations will be matched based on the the office being sought.

- Statewide: 6 to 1 for up to the first \$250
- Local: 12 to 1 for first \$50; 9 to 1 for next \$100 and 8 to 1 for final \$100

To take effect in 2024 for local offices and 2026 for statewide offices.

Sick Leave:

Sick Leave to support those employees impacted by **COVID-19**. This bill was passed earlier this year ([A10153](#) / [S8091](#)):

- Employers with **10 employees or less and net income less than \$1 million**: unpaid sick leave and immediately become eligible for Paid Family Leave and Temporary Disability;
- Employers with **11-99 employees or net income >\$1 million**: 5 days paid sick leave then eligible for Paid Family Leave and Temporary Disability;
- Employers with **100 employees or more and all public employees**: minimum of 14 days paid sick leave.

CONS

Bail Reform Roll Back:

The list of qualifying crimes have been expanded to include crimes such as: **Class-A misdemeanors; Misdemeanor re-arrest; Arrest while on probation; Enterprise corruption; Vehicular assault.**

Expanding the crimes to include lesser crimes such as misdemeanors gives the justice system an opportunity to continue imprisoning people who likely are not to be harmful to the community if released while waiting for trial, including those who may have been wrongfully accused and arrested. This will have a negative impact on low-income and minority communities.

Additional qualifying crimes that have been added include: **Domestic violence - criminal obstruction of breathing, strangulation, unlawful imprisonment; Aggravated assault - person less than 11-years old; Grand larceny 1; Money laundering 1; Criminal possession of a controlled substance 1; Criminal sale 1; Sex trafficking (B felony) and Sex trafficking of a child (B felony); failure to register as a sex offender or endangering the welfare of a child while a level 3 sex offender.**

REJECTED

The following Executive proposals were rejected by the Assembly

Education: Rejected the authorization to **annually increase** undergraduate resident tuition up to **\$200 a year** through the 2024-25 academic year.

Taxpayers: Rejected a change to STAR (School Tax Relief) **from an exemption to a credit** program for homeowners making \$200,000 or more in annual income. Also, rejected the elimination of **Video Lottery Terminal (VLT)** aid for all municipalities outside the city of Yonkers. (*support was restored to the full \$9.3 million*).

Transportation: Rejected the authorization of the **Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and Metro-North Railroad** to enter private property abutting their rights of way to remove or trim vegetation.

Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte represents the 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn covering Ditmas Park, Flatbush, East Flatbush and Midwood. She is currently the **Chair of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)**, and serves on the following committees: **Housing, Government Operations, Education, Banks, Health, and Higher Education**. She is also a member of the Task Force on Women's Issues and sits on **Governor Cuomo's Domestic Violence Advisory Council and Mayor De Blasio's MWBE Task Force**.

As a current Assemblymember, District Leader, and Chair of Brooklyn Democratic Party, Rodneyse Bichotte has been an outspoken advocate on issues concerning **immigration, education, economic development, unemployment, education reform, health care access, senior citizen centers, affordable housing, school safety, women's and LGBTQ rights**, as well as other issues affecting the quality of life in the community.

Learn more about
Rodneyse Bichotte by visiting her website:
<http://nyassembly.gov/mem/Rodneyse-Bichotte>

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