

NEWS FROM

.....
Carl E. Heastie
Member of Assembly



Dear Neighbor(s),

I'm proud to report we passed a balanced and fair state budget under extremely challenging circumstances. We were able to overcome a \$4.4 billion deficit and take care of the neediest New Yorkers.

As always, I'd like to thank you for your continuing support, as well as thank my Assembly Majority colleagues who have given me the privilege of leading them. They displayed great resolve to help working families.

As a result of our dedication and commitment, we were able to reform the sexual harassment laws in New York State government. We were able to secure more funding for education, invest in infrastructure and transportation repairs and increase aid to college students. The \$168.3 billion 2018-19 state budget will provide the quality health care and critical services that our families rely on and funds our shared New York values.

The federal government has created a very challenging circumstance for states like New York by eliminating the state and local tax deduction on federal income tax returns. This would likely hurt many New York taxpayers, but we have attempted to mitigate the cost to taxpayers by restructuring our tax code.

As always, there is still much more to be done to help our families thrive and find success. If there is anything I can help you with, please feel free to contact me.

With Love and Hope,

Carl E. Heastie
Member of Assembly

Assemblyman Heastie wins investments for students

The 2018-19 state budget builds on the Assembly's commitment to ensuring every New York student receives a quality education by providing a total of \$26.7 billion in education funding. That's an increase of \$914 million – or 3.6 percent – over the previous year and a 36 percent increase since 2012. This includes a \$618 million increase in Foundation Aid for a total of \$17.8 billion, which was accomplished while the state was facing a \$4.4 billion deficit.

“Every parent wants the best for their children, which is why it's so important that education and child care have the proper funding to provide the best services available,” said Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie.

The budget invests close to \$80 million to ensure safe, affordable child care, including a minimum of \$10 million for new subsidized child care slots and \$3.82 million to restore School Based Health Centers.

To ensure that the children of New York State have every opportunity to succeed in life, regardless of their family's financial situation, the state budget funds programs dedicated to helping young people achieve success, including: \$22.3 million for the Advantage After School Program and \$15.6 million for the Youth Development Program.



Google and Assemblyman Heastie help students learn how to use new technology in the classroom.

Assemblyman Heastie secures funding for emergency subway repairs

Funds the MTA Subway Action Plan

The 2018-19 state budget allows for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Subway Action Plan to be fully funded – for a total of \$836 million – to make emergency repairs and enhance subway performance. New York State and New York City will share the responsibility of funding the initiative. The plan also expands select bus services throughout the city so residents can get around more easily and reach their destinations on time. And, to establish a long-term funding stream for New York City public transportation, the budget enacts a \$2.75 surcharge on for-hire vehicles, \$2.50 for yellow cabs and \$0.75 for pooled trips below 96th Street in Manhattan.

Supporting NYCHA tenants

The budget provides \$250 million for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to make capital repairs, including replacing and updating heating equipment, as well as weatherization and other critical maintenance projects. This money is only a start to addressing the issues, noted Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie.

It also allows NYCHA to use the design-build procurement process, which would expedite boiler replacements and other construction and repair projects by consolidating both the design and construction of a project into a single contract. This funding will build on the \$300 million allocated to NYCHA since 2015.

Heastie passes Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program

Assemblyman Carl Heastie announced that the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018-19 budget agreement includes an important investment program to support New York's seniors. The spending plan will establish the New York State Secure Choice Savings retirement program for private-sector employees to elect to enroll in to save for retirement. 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.

“Secure Choice will offer hardworking men and women across New York an easy way to save for their futures.”



Carl Heastie in collaboration with the AARP provided document shredding services to constituents to help fight fraud.



Assemblyman Heastie sent well wishes to librarian Joan Aiken on her retirement from the New York Public Library Eastchester Branch after several years of dedicated service.

Assemblyman Carl Heastie secures higher education funding

The 2018-19 state budget invests \$7.6 billion in higher education, an increase of \$1.2 billion – or 25 percent – since 2012.

The 2018-19 budget plan allocates \$118 million to support the approximately 27,000 students in the Excelsior Scholarship program, which makes SUNY and CUNY schools tuition-free for New Yorkers who earn less than \$110,000 this year. When fully phased in, the program will enable more than half of all full-time students at public colleges and universities to attend school tuition-free.

Expanding opportunity programs

The spending plan also restores \$23.8 million to college opportunity programs, including:

- \$35.5 million for the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), which is \$5.9 million more than the executive budget proposal;
- \$32.2 million for the Education Opportunity Program (EOP), which is \$5.36 million more than the executive proposal;
- \$28.1 million for Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK), which is \$4.68 million more than the executive proposal;
- \$18.4 million for Liberty Partnerships, which is \$3.06 million more than the executive proposal;
- \$15.8 million for the Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP), which is \$2.6 million more than the executive proposal; and
- \$11.9 million for the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (C-STEP), which is \$1.99 million more than the executive proposal.

Assembly combats opioid crisis

The budget establishes a fund supported by a fee paid by manufacturers and distributors registered to sell and/or distribute opioids in the state. The \$100 million Opioid Stewardship Fund seeks to help curb the epidemic by creating a partnership with the pharmaceutical industry to expand prevention, treatment and recovery programs for individuals with substance use disorder. The state budget also allocates nearly \$250 million in funding to address the heroin and opioid crisis which will support a variety of treatment and prevention programs, including family support navigators, peer supports, recovery clubhouses and community coalitions.

Assembly secures critical health care funding

“Affordable, quality health care should be a human right, but far too often, New Yorkers are forced to choose between health care and putting food on the table,” said Assemblyman Heastie. “We fought hard to make sure this budget protects vital health programs so people will get the health care they need.”

The budget addresses rising drug and health insurance costs so that more New Yorkers have access to the health care they need. It restores \$29.13 million for pharmacy initiatives, including a \$17.4 million restoration to existing prescriber prevails over insurance drug choice provisions. The budget restores \$25.82 million to protect Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) and adult day health care transportation services.

The budget also protects the hospitals and facilities that provide critical care to New York’s most vulnerable. It provides:

- for the establishment of a health care transformation fund to provide support for our hospitals and staff to provide continued access to vital healthcare in our community;
- a total of \$525 million in health transformation capital funding;
- an increase of \$15 million for enhanced safety-net facilities that provide care to large Medicaid populations, for a total of \$25 million; and
- an increase of \$15 million for critical access and sole community hospitals, which provide services in rural communities, for a total of \$25 million.

Caring for our elders

The state budget restores \$8.16 million to support long-term care. It also restores \$7.81 million to preserve spousal refusal, ensuring couples do not lose their life savings in the event a spouse becomes ill and needs nursing home care, and rejects the proposal to limit the amount of resources a community spouse is allowed to retain.

Additionally, the budget restores \$13.99 million in hospital and nursing home reductions, protecting hospital and nursing capital reimbursements. It also restores \$12 million in managed care reductions.



Assemblyman Heastie helps repair damage from the hurricanes in the Virgin Islands.

Protecting New Yorkers from federal tax changes

The state budget includes measures to protect New Yorkers from the impact of the federal tax plan, which increases taxes on many middle-class families by restricting state and local tax deductibility.

One measure creates state-operated charitable contributions funds designed to help improve health care and educational outcomes for all New Yorkers. Taxpayers who donate to the funds can claim these contributions as deductions on their state and federal tax deductions, as well as claim a state tax credit equal to 85 percent of the donation amount. School districts and local governments would be allowed to create similar charitable funds that would offer local property tax deductions equal to a percentage of the contribution amount.

The budget also creates a new Employer Compensation Expense Tax (ECET) that employers would have the option of participating in. The ECET is a 5 percent tax on all annual payroll expenses in excess of \$40,000 per employee, and would be phased in over a three-year period. The new tax would cut personal income taxes on earnings and a new tax credit would ensure that employees subject to the ECET do not see a decrease in take-home pay.

YMCA Project update

The long-awaited YMCA for the Northeast Bronx is moving closer to construction. Assemblyman Heastie has worked with the YMCA of Greater New York and local community groups to receive preliminary approval for the facility's unique design from the Public Design Commission. The Public Design Commission approves facility designs on public land. In order for the city to lease the land to the YMCA, the YMCA and NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) have been taking the project through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The YMCA and NYCEDC have secured the approvals from Community Board 12 and the Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. through his official authorization in addition to his \$3 million contribution to the project. City Planning is set to vote on the ULURP in April, then it will go to the City Council in May. Construction could start as early as this summer.

Construction will be done in two phases: The first phase, which will focus on The Christopher School's campus, is scheduled to start early this summer; and the second phase, which will focus on the actual YMCA facility, will start in late fall. Construction should end by 2020. Prior to and during construction, the YMCA will work with Assemblyman Heastie's office to hold job fairs in the community.

Fighting sexual harassment

The state budget takes overdue steps to address and combat sexual harassment and provide more recourse for victims. It includes legislation to ensure that employers across the state in the public and private sectors have comprehensive policies to combat sexual harassment in the workplace. Moreover, the measure bars confidentiality clauses in any settlement except when specifically requested by the victim. It also allows a state or local government that has paid a victim for a sexual harassment claim on behalf of a public employee to recover payment from the employee responsible for the harassment. Further, it would ban mandatory arbitration agreements for claims of sexual harassment.

"No one should have to suffer harassment or sexual misconduct. It is degrading and must not be tolerated, especially at work," said Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie."

New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248

News from

Carl E. Heastie

Member of Assembly

PRSR STD.
US Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 75

"This year's state budget posed many challenges in the face of a sizeable deficit, but we made sure it stayed true to our New York values and put hardworking families first."

— Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie



1446 E. Gun Hill Road • Bronx, NY 10469 • 718-654-6539 • Speaker@nyassembly.gov