



NEWS From Assemblymember John T. McDonald III

Spring 2018



Assemblymember McDonald at an Assembly Budget Hearing.

2018-19 State Budget Highlights

The recently passed 2018-19 state budget invests \$168.3 billion that includes a nearly \$1 billion increase in education funding, invests in infrastructure and transportation repairs, and protects New Yorkers from federal tax changes.

Providing aid to localities, investing in safe roads and transportation

The 2018-19 state budget continues the Assembly's commitment to helping local governments by increasing funding for the Aid to Localities program by \$16.75 million for a total of \$1.05 billion.

This funding will go a long way toward helping municipalities afford the cost of providing essential programs and services to our communities, from mental health care to supporting seniors – all while keeping local taxes in check.

The state's spending plan also makes a critical investment in local infrastructure to make sure residents have reliable public transportation and can get to where they need to go safely. The budget funds the fourth year of the five-year \$29.2 billion state Department of Transportation (DOT) Capital Plan, including \$538 million for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Program (CHIPs) and the Marchiselli Program, which help municipalities complete road and bridge maintenance projects.

The budget also includes \$225 million to fund the state's match of savings from shared services actions to further help keep property taxes in check. It continues the county-wide shared services panels and removes a hurdle that prevented localities from sharing some specific services.

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County	Municipality Name	18/19 CHIPs	18/19 Pave NY	18/19 Total
Albany	County of Albany	\$2,657,996.38	\$543,954.47	\$3,201,950.85
Albany	City of Albany	\$1,788,156.01	\$354,959.37	\$2,143,115.38
Albany	City of Cohoes	\$402,958.66	\$80,026.54	\$482,985.20
Albany	City of Watervliet	\$224,956.05	\$45,215.26	\$270,171.31
Albany	Village of Green Island	\$56,241.32	\$10,841.10	\$67,082.42
Rensselaer	County of Rensselaer	\$2,655,719.69	\$534,532.70	\$3,190,252.39
Rensselaer	City of Rensselaer	\$222,832.88	\$44,347.55	\$267,180.43
Rensselaer	City of Troy	\$1,098,255.10	\$218,045.85	\$1,316,300.95
Rensselaer	Town of North Greenbush	\$121,142.44	\$23,401.15	\$144,543.59
Saratoga	County of Saratoga	\$2,992,054.48	\$605,369.79	\$3,597,424.27
Saratoga	Town of Waterford	\$44,481.16	\$7,400.09	\$51,881.25
Total	All Municipalities	\$12,264,794.17	\$2,468,093.87	\$14,732,888.04

18-19 numbers reflect \$65 million legislative add for extreme weather recovery.

Investing in public education

The 2018-2019 state budget builds on the Assembly's commitment to ensuring every New York student receives a quality education by providing a total of \$26.6 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, the aid that provides greater support for students in the classroom, for a total of \$17.8 billion.

Protecting public libraries

The budget continues New York's commitment to local libraries, providing a total of \$96.6 million, an increase of \$1 million over last year. Libraries not only lend books, they also offer resources ranging from adult literacy classes to job search resources and provide a community hub for everyone from the youngest children to retirees. In addition, the budget provides for an increase of \$10 million to support library capital projects across the state, which is the first increase in capital funding for libraries in several years.



Assemblymember John T. McDonald III with Aminata Toumbou, Albany High School Student and NYS YMCA Youth Governor.

Making higher education more affordable

A college degree is increasingly vital to landing a good-paying job and securing a middle-class living. Unfortunately, rising costs have left far too many New York families unable to pay for higher education. To address this affordability crisis and help level the playing field, 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 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. For the 2019 Academic year, the Excelsior Scholarship income eligibility threshold will increase to include New Yorkers with household incomes up to \$110,000 and will support an estimated 27,000 students. Additionally, the final budget expands eligibility for Enhanced Tuition Awards to students at proprietary colleges and contains other provisions to allow the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) to change a student's determination of eligibility for these programs under certain circumstances. It also includes a modification to clarify that private scholarships made exclusively for non-tuition expenses are not counted in the calculation for Excelsior scholarship awards.

Strengthening child care for New York State families and looking out for our youngest New Yorkers

Every parent wants the best for their kids, which is why it is so important that facilities and staff members tasked with taking care of children have the proper funding to provide the best services available.

The budget invests close to \$80 million to ensure safe, affordable child care, including:

- \$31 million for pre-licensure and annual licensing inspections for child care providers;
- \$17 million for conducting background checks on child care providers and staff members;
- \$15 million for infant and toddler care quality efforts;
- \$12 million for ongoing training on health and safety programs; and
- \$2 million for staffing system changes.

The state budget also provides a minimum of \$10 million for new subsidized child care slots.



Senator Neil Breslin, Assemblymember Patricia Fahy, OASAS Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez, Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple, and Assemblymember John McDonald at the grand opening of the Addictions Care Center of Albany Women and Children's Residence.

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The budget provides crucial funding for children's health initiatives, including:

- \$15 million to ensure that the expansion of children's mental health services is not delayed;
- \$3.82 million to restore School Based Health Centers to programs such as Whitney Young; and
- \$2.55 million to restore Early Intervention programs, which provide invaluable services to children with disabilities and their families.

Investing in communities to create good jobs

To help secure New York's economic future, the state budget invests \$1.36 billion to enable local businesses to grow and thrive and attract new businesses to the state. The funding will be distributed through the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC).

It also establishes a new Consolidated Funding Application to help businesses find and hire talented workers and expand apprenticeships, especially in growing industries like clean energy and technology. The program will also focus on efforts to improve the economic security of women, young people and other populations that face significant barriers to career advancement.

The state budget also allocates \$100 million for the third round of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), which awards \$10 million to 10 communities across the state that are struggling with population loss or economic distress. These awards will help create good-paying jobs, boost local economies and turn downtown communities and neighborhoods into economic engines where future generations of New Yorkers want to live and work. I look forward to working with our eligible communities to bring success to our Assembly District.

The budget invests in workforce development training which is vital for the many small businesses that I frequently hear from. We should be investing in our people and that investment will create a skilled workforce that these businesses need to succeed. Small businesses employ more than half of all employees in the private sector, and it's critical that these economic drivers have the tools and resources they need to succeed. The 2018-19 state budget allocates \$1.67 million for local economic development initiatives.

The budget also:

- provides \$500,000 to create the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) /Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Technical Assistance Program to promote technological advancement and the commercialization of innovations developed through federally funded research; and
- allocates \$400,000 to the Community Development Revolving Loan Fund and an additional \$300,000, for a total of \$1.8 million, to support Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).

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Additionally, the spending plan provides an additional \$365,000 in funding for the Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) Development and Lending Program for a total of \$1 million, extends the program for a year and gives priority to recapitalizing the MWBE Investment Fund.

Tax cuts for middle-class families

The budget also continues phasing in middle-class tax cuts, which are projected to save families \$4.2 billion annually by 2025. The plan reduces the state income tax rate from 6.45 to 5.5 percent for those earning between \$40,000 and \$150,000 and from 6.65 to 6 percent for those who earn between \$150,000 and \$300,000. Families will see average savings of \$250 this year and, when they're fully phased in, 6 million New Yorkers will save \$700 each year.

The budget also continues the local property tax relief credit, which will provide an average reduction of \$380 to 2.6 million taxpayers in 2018. Next year, the tax credit will offer an additional \$1.3 billion in property tax relief and save the average New Yorker \$530.

If you would like any additional information regarding these initiatives and other budgetary measures, please feel free to reach out to my office as always at 518-455-4474 or mcdonaldj@nyassembly.gov.



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