



# Assemblymember PATRICIA A. FAHY

109<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



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Web: [www.nyassembly.gov/fahy](http://www.nyassembly.gov/fahy)



## Spring 2024

I'm pleased to share that the FY2025 State Budget has been adopted and addresses many of the needs critical to the future of our Capital Region. While work remains on outstanding issues, such as passing my NY Home Energy Affordable Transition (HEAT) Act to ensure our clean energy transition is reliable and planned, this is a budget recap. A summary of the legislative session will follow shortly.

In my second year as the Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, I'm proud that this budget continues increases in vital state aid for SUNY and CUNY, which now totals the largest increase in state aid for SUNY in the last 5 decades, while also raising Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) income thresholds to make college more affordable for middle-class and low-income families. Here in the Capital Region, we were successful in securing \$10 million in funding for the State Museum to co-locate a children's science museum, a historic increase in local 'AIM' government funding, \$15 million in Capital City funding for Albany, and more.

I am honored to represent each of you in the New York State Assembly, and I remain committed to ensuring the Capital Region and our local economy's future is stronger than ever.



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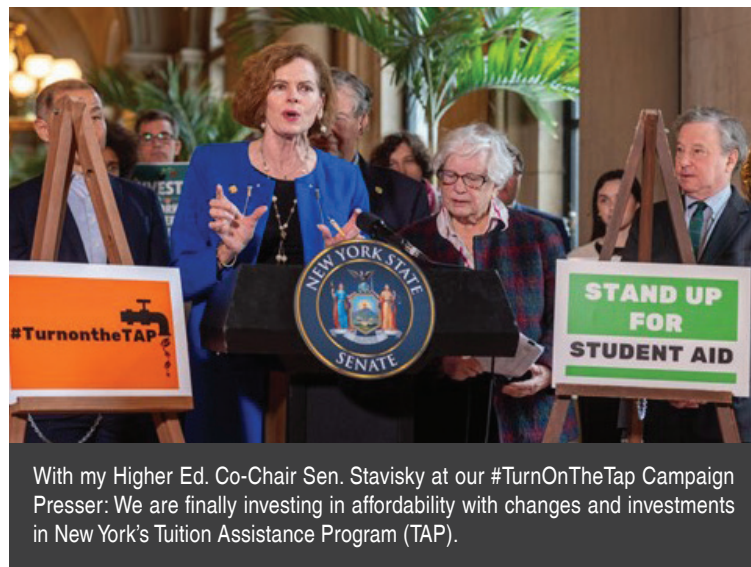


With the planned \$1.7 billion Wadsworth Public Health Laboratory consolidation, we stand at the cusp of a new era for the Harriman State Office Campus. But it raises a question: Will we embrace the 21st century, or will we repeat the parking lot-sized design mistakes rooted in the 1960s?

Times Union: Read my op-ed on why it's vital we use the \$1.7 billion Wadsworth Lab opportunity to redesign and redevelop Harriman Campus.



Map Data © 2024 Google



With my Higher Ed. Co-Chair Sen. Stavisky at our #TurnOnTheTap Campaign Presser: We are finally investing in affordability with changes and investments in New York's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

## Investing in Our Future and Families

This year's budget makes significant investments to help New York State's workers, small businesses, and families tackle the affordability crisis, and invests in the Capital Region's future. Although there is always more work to be done, this fiscal plan delivers for New Yorkers and their families in meaningful ways.

### New Protections for Tenants and Critical Incentives to Build Housing

New York is in the midst of a severe housing crisis and shortage, and I'm optimistic that the multi-pronged housing package included in the budget will aggressively grow our housing stock with new building incentives and flexibility, while new tenant protections will enable more neighbors to remain in their homes. Included in the package are:

- **Eviction** protections that will allow tenants who are paying rent on-time to remain in their homes.
- **Incentives** that will encourage the construction of new housing units, including a new program targeted at apartment renovations.
- **Funding** for first-time homeowners and for those facing foreclosure which will help more New Yorkers remain in their homes and attain homeownership.

The package will also enable upstate municipalities like Albany to 'opt-in' and pass 'Good Cause' tenant protections tailored to our market and community as evictions, rents, and housing prices skyrocket.

Continued on next page



Meeting Albany High Students during their 2024 Student Conference. I met with Albany High School Students Rashad Miller and Troy Treece during the 2024 Student Conference where they discussed the programs they're involved in that are helping to expand their skill sets and future plans to attend college here in New York.



# Investing in Our Future and Families (continued)

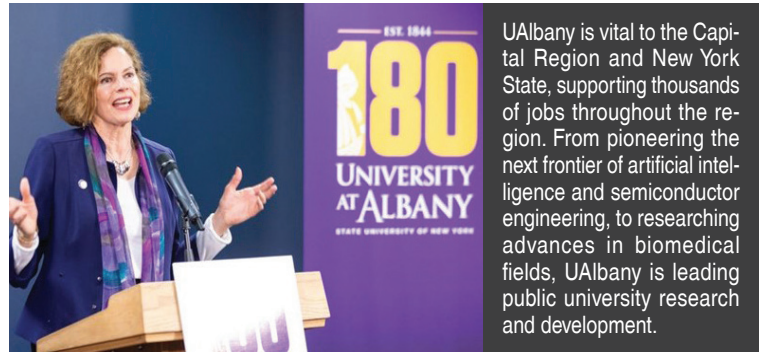
## Ushering in a New Era for Higher Education

As Chair of the Assembly's Higher Education Committee, I'm proud to announce a historic expansion in New York's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) as a result of our #TurnOnTheTAP campaign, the largest in 25 years. These changes include:

- raising the maximum income threshold limit from \$80,000 to \$125,000 for middle class families,
- raising the minimum award amount from \$500 to \$1,000, and
- raising income threshold limits for independent married and single independent students.

Further, to build on the successful investments last year, we were able to secure:

- \$60 million in additional SUNY operating aid, as well as
- \$40 million CUNY operating aid as they turn around their post-COVID enrollment by strengthening academic programs and offerings for students.
- **FAFSA.** On a related front, the new requirement for universal FAFSA completion will ensure that New York students take full advantage of the more than \$200 million in federal student aid currently left on the table every year.



UAlbany is vital to the Capital Region and New York State, supporting thousands of jobs throughout the region. From pioneering the next frontier of artificial intelligence and semiconductor engineering, to researching advances in biomedical fields, UAlbany is leading public university research and development.

## Healthcare Access and Affordability

- **Insulin.** New York will become the first state to eliminate insulin co-payments for state-regulated healthcare plans, because no one should have to choose between accessing life-saving medicine and putting food on their table.
- **Nursing Homes.** Our healthcare workforce and facilities will see badly-needed Medicaid rates increase for nursing homes by up to 5.1% to better support those who care for our seniors, and while it is limited, a 2.84% cost of living increase, with 1.7% going to direct wage enhancements, will help our health and home care workers continue to see critical wage increases.
- **Hospitals.** I'm also pleased that \$800 million will go towards a fund supporting our financially distressed hospitals, and that New York State will become the first state to offer paid prenatal leave to expectant pregnant people and mothers to better support our working families.



With a shortage of volunteer firefighters in the State of New York, I rallied with volunteer firefighters to highlight the essential work they provide to our communities. I am happy to announce that \$10 million was allocated in the State Budget to launch New York's First Training Stipend Program for Volunteer Firefighters!

## Public Safety and Combating Gun Violence

- **Retail Theft.** On public safety, we're taking action to better protect retail workers at the workplace and help businesses grapple with the increase in organized retail theft amidst an unprecedented rise in attacks on workers and coordinated theft operations.
- **Hate Crimes.** To combat the rise of hate, anti-semitism, and Islamophobia, we're expanding the list of hate crimes to better protect New Yorkers from harmful attacks and threats.
- **Gun Violence.** Further, New York is investing more than \$340 million in evidence-based gun violence prevention initiatives like SNUG to combat the scourge of gun violence that impacts too many communities like ours.
- **Illegal Cannabis.** Finally, and overdue, municipalities will be empowered to 'padlock' illegal marijuana dispensaries, enabling them to address these illicit locations and allowing our legal adult-use retail market to gain footing.



Reading to kids at the South End Children's Cafe to get them in the mood for the NYS Assembly's Summer Reading Challenge! Learn how to complete it here: [bit.ly/fahyreading](https://bit.ly/fahyreading)

## Investing in Our P-12 Public Schools

New York's commitment to its P-12 public schools has always been unprecedented, and this year is no different. Proposed changes to the Foundation Aid formula were rejected in favor of a study that will ensure our schools, students, and teachers continue to have the resources and tools necessary to continue providing a quality and accessible education. **Albany City School District, Voorheesville Central School District, and Guilderland Central School District all received significant increases in state aid again this year.** Additionally, this budget provides \$103.9 million in aid to New York's and the Capital Region's public libraries, an increase of \$1.7 million over the executive proposal.

## Transportation

- Up to \$1.3 billion will go towards helping to modernize, repair, and upgrade New York's highways, roads, and bridges. Critically, these investments will create thousands of good-paying union jobs for New Yorkers and their families.
- Included in this funding is a \$60 million in additional funding for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) and \$40 million for the State Route NY program, which reimburses cities, villages and towns for capital project costs in New York or U.S.-signed state touring routes that run through them.
- **CDTA.** To help boost upstate transportation infrastructure spending and maintenance, this budget provides \$333 million for upstate transit operating assistance to support entities like the CDTA, for a total increase of \$26 million.

## Climate Action and Environment

- **HEAT.** While we failed to include my New York HEAT Act in the final budget agreement and in passing it at the end of session, we took important steps to continue funding the Environmental Protection Fund, which helps to protect, preserve, and fund important conservation and preservation projects throughout New York and the Capital Region.
- **Clean Water.** Additionally, we increased funding for clean water infrastructure at \$500 million, \$250 million above what was originally proposed.
- **RAPID Act.** Finally, we included important provisions of the RAPID Act, which will ensure that farmers and community organizations have more input when it comes to siting renewable energy projects in towns, villages, and cities, to assist and accelerate our transition to cleaner and more renewable energy sources in a sustainable manner.



## Investing in Our Future and Families (continued)



Thacher State Park is now a National Natural Landmark: With Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado and New Scotland Supervisor Doug LaGrange, we celebrated this incredible honor, and a huge shoutout to my constituent, Tim Albright of New Scotland, who has dedicated his life to securing this designation.

### Affordability

Tier 6 state workers will see the average salary calculation change from five to the final three years of employment in reforms to our state's pension plan. The budget also includes a historic \$350 million for families eligible for the Empire State Child Tax Credit. As we continue to succeed in implementing the lowest Middle-Class Tax rate in over 70 years, this tax credit will provide direct support to working families, and save average New Yorkers millions of dollars each year.



**ICYMI:** In May, the NYS Department of Transportation released concept designs for the future of I-787 as part of our Reimagining 787 study. Open houses will be held in the future, but you can review and comment on these concepts, which will be included in the final proposal, here: <https://webapps.dot.ny.gov/reimagining-i-787>



Press Conference with Riverkeeper and other colleagues on protecting New York State's waterways: We rallied to present the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with a single message: issue a 'not protective' determination, remediate remaining PCBs, and take real steps to finally make our historic waterway -- the Hudson River -- clean and safe.

## Local and Capital Region Budget Wins

Locally, our Capital Region saw several critical investments included in this budget that I'm proud to have helped secure. These include:

- New funding of \$10 million will go towards upgrades and renovations at the **New York State Museum** as we seek to co-locate a children's museum,
- Funding to keep the **Burdett Birth Center** open for at least 5 more years thanks to our advocacy with Assemblymember John McDonald,
- \$250,000 for a prestigious Center of Excellence at UAlbany's RNA Institute will help lead the way on growing the biomedical economy in our region,
- For the first time in years, aid to local governments will see a more than \$40 million boost in **AIM funding** for municipalities, in addition to Albany's Capital City Funding of \$15 million,
- **New Alive Downtown!** funding will direct \$300,000 to Palace Theater, along with performing arts centers across the Capital Region and state to support the arts,
- \$200,000 in funding was secured to build the union workforce of the future here in Albany via the Multi-Craft Apprenticeship Program (MAPP) in the South End,
- \$150,000 for the critical work of Albany Law School's Immigration Clinic, and
- more than \$100,000 to support our veterans here in Albany County through the Dwyer Peer to Peer Veteran Program.

Despite these wins, the adopted budget did not include funding for a Harriman Campus redesign study to integrate and connect the state campus to the City of Albany as part of the \$1.7 billion Wadsworth Labs project, but work will continue separately on this vision to better use over 200 acres of mostly parking lots.



Introducing Corporal Kenneth Bailey in the Assembly: I was so proud to introduce Voorheesville native Corporal Kenneth Bailey, who served in the Fourth Cavalry, the oldest unit in the U.S. Army, throughout World War II. I thank you for your service and sacrifice Corporal, we would not live a life of freedom without people like you!

For #WomensHistoryMonth this year, I had the honor of recognizing a familiar face in the Assembly for her work in our community – **Dina Refki**. As a professor and leader of the Center for Women in Government & Civil Society (CWGCS) at UAlbany, she has championed a swathe of efforts to increase representation, advance women's rights, and support aspiring young leaders. Her work focuses on eliminating barriers in accessing reproductive health services, building women's political power and expanding representation in elected bodies, and more!





# Legislative Priorities

## MORE WORK TO DO: Pushing the New York Home Energy Affordable Transition (HEAT) Act (A.4592 Fahy/S.2016 Krueger)

2023 was the hottest year on record. New Yorkers experienced deadly blizzards, smoke-filled skies, and increasingly extreme, climate-driven weather events as their energy costs continue to rise. Excluding my Home Energy Affordable Transition (HEAT) Act, means more work ahead to avoid a continued subsidy of the costly buildout of gas infrastructure across the state amidst a climate crisis.

## PASSED: Leveling the Playing Field for NY's Estimated \$1 Billion Short-Term Rental Industry (A.4130 Fahy/S.885 Hinchey)

Additionally, New York's \$1 billion short term rental industry will finally receive the proper transparency as localities struggle to deal with the exponential growth that is straining local housing supply. Legislation I sponsor with Senator Michelle Hinchey was passed at the end of session to create a statewide registry, and create parity with sales taxes and occupancy taxes similar to those paid by hotels and motels. These taxes are essential to funding local tourism initiatives, supporting communities throughout the state and here in the Capital Region.

**More to come in the next update!**

# Highlighting the 109th's Historic Businesses



Inducting Robinson Ace Hardware into the New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry: Robinson's Hardware has been a part of the Capital Region community for 65 years. Donald Robinson originally opened its doors in 1958 under the name Robinson and Hennet Hardware, and three generations as a family-owned business later, has become an Ace Hardware Co-op, in which they have successfully focused on convenience, service, and knowledge to provide to their customers!



Inducting The National Upholstering DesignStudio/Gallery into the New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry: Located on Lark Street, the original business was founded in 1942 by R. Vincent DeMarco, and he continued to own it up until 1980. Since then, DeMarco's daughter, Chris, took over the shop, and blends old and new, practicality and artistry in a unique way that continues to fit the needs of the Albany community!

## Farmers Markets in the 109th District!

### Delaware Community Farmers' Market

Delaware Branch Library  
331 Delaware Avenue, Albany  
Tuesdays, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
June 18 - November 5

### Empire State Plaza Wednesday Farmers' Market

Empire State Plaza  
Wednesdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Albany County Farmers' Market

MVP Arena, S. Pearl Street, Albany  
Sundays, 12 - 4 p.m.  
July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15

### Guilderland Farmers' Market

Guilderland Public Library  
2228 Western Avenue  
Sundays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Washington Park Farmers' Market

Knox Street Mall Road, Washington Park, Albany  
Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Altamont Farmers' Market

181 Main St, Altamont - Altamont Library  
Friday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
June - October

For more farmers markets and stands, visit: [www.bit.ly/109farmersmarkets](http://www.bit.ly/109farmersmarkets)

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Meeting with Guilderland Girl Scout Troop 5027 in our office at the State Capitol: As the future leaders of New York, I was impressed by their knowledge of state government and can't wait to see what they do next!

## New York State Assembly's 2024 SUMMER READING CHALLENGE



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