

# Weekly Report from Assemblyman Charles D. Fall March 17, 2022



# Litter Removal | Garden Beautification

WHEN: WHERE:
CLEANUP - Sunday March 20, 2022 Richmond Terrace & Jersey Street 8:00AM-10:00AM

Staten Island, NY 10301

Masks, Gloves and Hand Sanitizer Provided RSVP: Parnelj@nyassembly.gov or 718-442-9932





**Updates from Albany** 

This week the NYS Assembly released the Assembly's State Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Proposal of \$226.4 billion.

- The Assembly's spending plan aims to support New York's families as we move out of a two-year pandemic with unprecedented investments in childcare, universal prekindergarten, rent relief and home ownership, and sustainable living wages for our essential state health care workers.
- The proposed spending is \$7.9 billion or 3.6 percent higher than the Executive Budget proposal. Some of the highlighted summary:

# **Education**

The proposal provides \$30.9 billion in funding to General Support for Public Schools (GSPS), an increase of \$2.1 billion or seven percent, over the 2021-22 school year (SY), maintaining the Assembly Majority's commitment to ensuring every child has access to a high-quality education.

The Assembly's proposed spending plan would increase Foundation Aid by \$1.5 billion and would fully phase in Foundation Aid by the 2023-24 SY.

The budget also includes \$150 million for Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK), of which \$125 million would be used to support new statewide universal full-day pre-kindergarten programs paying \$10,000 per four-year old.

# Fair Pay

This spending plan would give state workers in New York's health and mental hygiene sectors permanent raises to help retain and grow our workforce and give them the wages they deserve for their hard work.

Under the proposal, direct care service providers from the Office of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), Office for the Aging (SOFA), Office of Temporary and Disability Services (OTDA), and Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) would receive an 11 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA).

#### Housing

This budget proposal helps fight homelessness and keep New Yorkers that have struggled financially during the pandemic their homes.

The Assembly makes critical investments in rent and homeownership relief including:

- \$1.25 billion for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP);
- \$500 million for a utility arrears program, to be administered by the Public Service Commission; and
- \$400 million for the Landlord Rental Assistance Program (LRAP).

An additional \$250 million would establish the Housing Access Voucher Program (HVAP) to help individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure permanent housing and transition out of shelters or unsustainable housing situations. The budget also includes \$500 million for New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) capital repairs.

The plan adds \$1.7 billion to the five-year affordable housing capital plan, for a total of \$6.2 billion. Within that funding, the Assembly's spending plan includes \$1.35 billion to fund a new Assembly homeownership program.

# **Higher Education**

This spending plan makes investments to ensure higher education is accessible for all New York students by funding the State University of New York (SUNY) and City University of New

York's (CUNY) world class educational programs and providing \$215 million for opportunity programs.

The SFY 2022-23 Assembly Budget includes \$48.8 million to SUNY and \$59.6 million to CUNY to fully reimburse each system and eliminate the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) gap.

It also provides \$1.63 billion in expansion capital for both SUNY and CUNY for a five-year capital plan, an increase of \$1.2 billion over the executive proposal, and makes an additional investment of \$200 million in state operating support funds each for SUNY and CUNY.

The Assembly provides \$204 million to increase the maximum TAP award by \$1,405, bringing it from \$5,665 to \$7,070 over the next two years so that the maximum TAP award matches SUNY's tuition. Additionally, the Assembly will raise the minimum TAP award from \$500 to \$1,000.

# **Economic Development**

The Assembly invests in programs that support our small businesses, encourage innovation and help rebuild New York's economy.

The plan includes a second round of \$25 million for the Restaurant Resiliency Grant program to help New York's restaurants continue to recover and rebuild, as well as \$231.4 million for the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to help theaters and museums which were hit especially hard by the pandemic to recover.

The Assembly also provides \$300 million in state funding to ensure access to high-speed internet across the state for a total of \$1.4 billion when combined with \$1.1 billion in federal funding.

# **Transportation**

The Assembly State Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget will invest \$14 billion in the state's transportation network, including a \$436 million increase in funding for the Department of Transportation's (DOT) five year capital plan for a total of \$33.2, and \$6.17 billion in transit assistance to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). These investments in our transportation infrastructure are also investments in our economy and will provide jobs for hardworking New Yorkers.

#### **Mental Health and Addiction Services**

For many people, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused uncertainty, financial strain and social isolation. This budget includes critical investments to improve access to mental health and substance use disorder services, including \$50 million in capital funds for municipal and nonprofit organizations to increase capacity and expand mental health and substance use disorder services. The proposal also provides \$65 million to support current community-based residential programs to assist in preserving access to housing for individuals in recovery, and \$5 million for Crisis Intervention Teams.

There is a \$53 million increase for children's mental health programs operated by OMH, including \$7.5 million in funding for residential treatment facilities (RTFs) for children, and \$10 million to expand children's community-based mental health services and integrate mental health services into pediatric primary care under the HealthSteps program. Other investments for children include \$100 million over two years for the Recover from COVID Schools Program (RECOVS), and an additional \$40 million for more mental health grants for schools.

Other mental health investments include \$29.8 million each for both SUNY and CUNY mental health services.

Disruptions to daily life combined with increased stress and reduced access to in person services caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a sharp spike in substance use disorders. The Assembly's proposed budget appropriates \$265.9 million from the Opioid Settlement Fund to expand access to critical addiction services.

#### Health

The Assembly budget would make critical health investments that protect vulnerable individuals, including undocumented immigrants, pregnant and postpartum women, children and the elderly and disabled New Yorkers.

It includes a new \$345 million appropriation to include coverage for undocumented immigrants under the Essential Plan.

It also provides an additional \$1 billion for safety net (\$750 million) and major public (\$250 million) hospitals.

The proposal prioritizes the health and wellness of pregnant women and new mothers by investing \$1.5 million to restore funding for the Nurse-Family Partnership program. It would expand prenatal and postpartum care and services under the Medicaid program and expand postpartum Medicaid coverage to one year following a pregnancy, regardless of immigration status.

#### **Criminal Justice Reforms**

The budget proposal includes critical funding for pretrial services that offer mental health treatment and other alternatives to incarceration, as well as funding for programs across the state to fight gun violence. It includes \$15 million in funding to help justice system involved New Yorkers access pretrial services, including job placement programs, drug treatment and counseling services. The budget also provides \$50 million for municipal and nonprofit organizations to increase capacity and an expansion of ATI, mental health and substance use disorder treatment programs. Also included is an additional \$19 million in critical investments to fight gun violence. An additional \$212.5 million in funding is dedicated to the Office of Indigent Legal Services, to provide increased representation to individuals who are entitled to counsel in court matters and are financially unable to obtain representation.

#### **Environmental Protection**

The Assembly Budget makes a significant investment in our environment. The plan increases funding for the Environmental Bond Act of 2022 by \$2 billion to be allocated for climate change related purposes, including:

- \$500 million for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at state-owned buildings;
- \$450 million for climate adaptation and mitigation projects, including for land acquisition and wetland protection;
- \$300 million to combat air pollution in environmental justice communities;
- \$250 million to combat water pollution in environmental justice communities;
- \$200 million to combat the urban heat island effect:
- \$150 million for open space conservation;
- \$100 million for farmland protection easements; and
- \$50 million for urban forest and habitat restoration projects.

The Assembly's proposal also allocates \$400 million for the state Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), an increase of \$100 million over last year's funding.

In addition to other funding supporting clean water initiatives in the proposed budget, the Assembly allocates \$500 million for clean water infrastructure.

Each house of the Legislature will now have to negotiate and pass their respective resolutions and then work with the Governor's office to pass and enact the official 2022-23 Budget by April 1, 2022.

If you would like to review in detail the Assembly One House Budget Proposal click on this link.

https://nyassembly.gov/Reports/WAM/AssemblyBudgetProposal/2022/

# Critical Updates, New Policies, and Testing Locations to Protect You and Your Community

1. Governor Kathy Hochul has announced the Environmental Facilities Corporation Board of Directors approved \$41 million in funding that includes low-cost loans and previously awarded grants, enabling the recipients to access these loan and grant funds and move their water and sewer infrastructure projects forward. The Board also approved an \$879 million leveraged bond financing to provide capital for various wastewater and drinking water projects for the New York City Municipal Water Finance

- Authority (NYCMWFA) and to refund certain prior bonds. Refunding bond sales deliver additional savings for EFC's municipal partners by refinancing the original bonds that funded their projects at an even lower interest rate. The transaction is estimated to save \$18 million for New York City ratepayers over the next 10 years.
- 2. Governor Kathy Hochul today announced that \$17.3 million in state funding was awarded to six projects in four counties that will provide emergency and permanent supportive housing to New Yorkers experiencing homelessness. Supported through the State's Homeless Housing and Assistance Program, these projects include emergency shelter repairs and developments that will create or preserve an additional 120 units serving veterans, survivors of domestic violence, individuals with a history of substance use disorder, and those suffering from serious mental illness.
- 3. Governor Hochul announced that the statewide indoor business mask-or-vaccine requirement have bee lifted as of Thursday, February, 10, and will remain optional for businesses, local governments and counties to enforce. This protocol, a temporary measure implemented on December 10 as statewide cases spiked, was an effective tool to address the winter surge and the rise of the Omicron variant. With case counts plummeting and hospitalizations sharply declining, this temporary measure is no longer needed statewide. Counties, cities, and businesses will be able to opt into the mask-or-vaccine requirement if they so choose. View Governor Hochul's Presentation Here
- 4. Governor Kathy Hochul today announced more than \$64 million in federal funding to help struggling New Yorkers with children, multi-generational households, and survivors of domestic violence with their expenses amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Administered through the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and the state Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund will provide one-time payments to help with the cost of diapers for struggling families, cover food expenses for households with both children and older adults, and provide crucial housing and relocation assistance for survivors of domestic violence.

# **Crucial Resources to Support and Aid Your Everyday Needs**

1. The NYS Homeowner Assitance Fund is available now. You may be eligible for up to \$50,000 in financial assistance.



2. Important: The NYS Department of Labor will mail 1099-G tax forms to all Excluded Workers Fund (EWF) recipients to the address listed on their EWF application. The information from this form must be included in tax filings for the 2021 calendar year. As you may know, payments from the EWF are considered taxable income. Although payments were mailed with state taxes already taken out, they may still be subject to federal income tax. For more information click here.



3. Our children have faced many challenges throughout the pandemic. Now they're back at school and being asked to return to normalcy, but this school year is anything but normal. That's why the UFT's Positive Learning Collaborative (PLC) is offering free, confidential mental health sessions to students and to parents calling on their children's behalf. Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday: 8:30 A.M. to 12 P.M. Saturday: 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Call 212-709-3222 or Text "PLC" to 43961

- 4. What is HEAP? The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps low-income people pay the cost of heating their homes. How does it work? If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per season and could also be eligible for an emergency HEAP benefit if you are in impending danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off. Are HEAP benefits available year-round? No, the application period normally begins in early to mid-November and continues into the winter, until funding for the program runs out.
- 5. Free SNAP Assistance See the flyer below





# Free SNAP (Food Stamps) Assistance ASISTENCIA GRATUITA DE SNAP (Cupones de alimentos)

MetroPlus Health Staten Island Community Office 238A Port Richmond Ave. Staten Island, NY 10302 SNAP enroller is on site **2 DAYS** a week. Check below for our hours!

Los especialista de SNAP estan disponbile los **2 dias a la semana**. ¡Revisa a continuación nuestros horarios y ubicaciones!

Day & Time Dia y Hora	Location Ubicacion	SNAP Enroller Especialista de SNAP	How to Schedule Como Programar
Tues, Wed Martes, Miercoles 9:00am – 4:30pm	In Office En la Oficina	Florence Lanipekun	Walk-in or call Orden de llegada o Llamar al <b>929-270-2181</b>
Mon, Thurs, Fri Lunes, Jueves, Viernes 9:00am — 4:30pm	Virtual Services (Remote) Servicios Virtuales (Remoto)	Florence Lanipekun	Call Llamar al <b>929-270-2181</b>

Sponsored by New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

SNAP.—Putting Healthy Food Within Reach. Visit www.mybenefits.my.gov to check your eligibility. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



6. It's important to submit an SBA Loan Application - After you apply for disaster assistance from FEMA, you may be referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration. If you are referred to SBA, you should complete and submit the application. If your application is approved, you are not obligated to accept the SBA disaster loan but failure to submit the application may disqualify you from other possible FEMA assistance, such as disaster-related car repairs, essential household items and other expenses. SBA disaster loans are the largest source of federal disaster recovery funds for survivors. In planning your recovery, give yourself the widest possible set of options. Submitting the application makes it possible for homeowners and renters to be considered for additional FEMA grants. Applicants may apply online using SBA's secure website at <a href="mailto:DisasterLoanAssistance.sba.gov">DisasterLoanAssistance.sba.gov</a> or they may email <a href="mailto:DisasterCustomerService@SBA.gov">DisasterCustomerService@SBA.gov</a> for more information on SBA's disaster assistance program. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or email

<u>disastercustomerservice@sba.gov</u> for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

- 7. If you're a renter having trouble paying your rent, utilities, or other housing costs or if you're a landlord trying to stay afloat with tenants in this situation help may be available. State and local programs are distributing billions of dollars in rental assistance to help renters stay housed during the pandemic. Visit the CFPB's Rental Assistance Finder to find out what this means for you and what you can do. The CFPB's site also includes resources to help renters and landlords understand other resources to help navigate various financial hardships related to the pandemic.
- 8. **Staten Island Legal Services wants to help you**. If you need **free legal** help during the COVID-19 crisis, for matters of immigration, foreclosure, small business advice, and more, **call them at 718-233-6480.**



9. Project Hospitality provides a wide range of services to our communities. From vaccinations to mental health guidance to help applying for rental assistance. See flyers below for more information.



#### Feeling uncertain, overwhelmed, anxious during COVID?



Here to talk | Here to listen | Here to support

- Information
   Education
- Emotional support Links to resources

We can provide virtual presentations on:

- Recognizing common reactions on:
   Building coping skills for the recovery process
- Managing COVID-related stress
   Identifying and meeting children's needs

Contact Us! (718)608-7900 HOPE@ProjectHospitality.org

We are here for YOU.

Free, anonymous & confidential

A program of the NYS Office of Mental Health Funded by FEMA



# Necesitas Te sientes incierto, agobiado, ansioso durante COVID?

Aquí para hablar | Aquí para escuchar | Aquí para apoyar

Nosotros Proporcionamos...
Información
Educación

- Apoyo emocional
   Enlaces a recursos

- Proporcionamos presentaciones virtuales sobre:

  Reconcociendo las resciones comunes de COVID

  Desarrollando habilidades de afrontamiento para el proceso de recuperación

  Manejando estritis relacionada con COVID

  Identificando y satisfaciendo las necesidades de los niños

¡Contáctanos Hoy! 718-608-7900 HOPE@ProjectHospitality.org

Estamos aqui para USTED.

Gratis, anónimo y confidencial

A program of the NYS Office of Mental Health Funded by FEMA



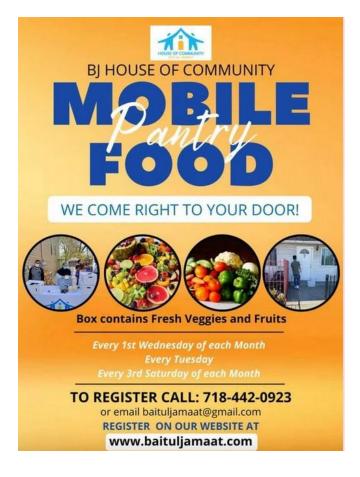






10. The BJ House Community - Mobile Pantry will come right to your door. Every first Wednesday of each month, every Tuesday, and every 3rd Saturday of each month.

(Rev. 05/21)



11. This robust 6-week community training program informs NewYorkers about NYPD policies, activities, and authorities.



12. The Y is now offering new rounds of FREE lifeguard training and certification this spring, including at the Broadway Y. Pre-tests are required for this opportunity and are currently underway, with lots of times and dates at Ys across the city. Experienced swimmers should see <a href="here">here</a> for details and scheduling.

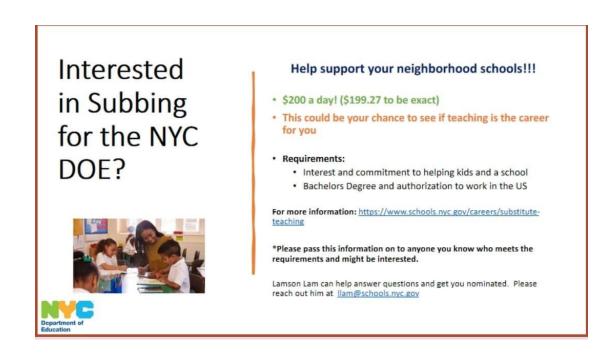


#### 13. Small Business Resources:

- For counseling and help services through SBS click here.
- Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs) help small businesses win federal contracts. PCRs view many federal acquisition and procurement strategies before they're announced. This enables them to influence opportunities that should be set aside for small businesses. PCRs also conduct market research, assist small businesses with payment issues, provide counseling on the contracting process, and more.
- <u>Subcontracting Program Assistance (SPA)</u> can help you with subcontracting questions after a contract is awarded. SPA can help you with tools to match prime contractors and subcontractors, help small businesses market their services to prime contractors, and more.
- SBA Learning Center. The SBA offers free online courses to help small businesses understand government contracting. You can find these video classes in the SBA Learning Center.

# **Useful Events and Opportunities**

1. Help support your neighborhood schools - For more information click here



2. Put your swimming skill to the ultimate test. Become an NYC Lifeguard – help keep New York's beaches and pools safe and develop skills that will last a lifetime.



3. Metro Plus Health & Phenomenal Women Association Time: 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM



4. Youth Build Healthcare Worker



5. Youth Build Construction Worker.



6. NYC DOE Job Fair March 24, 2022 The Michael J. Petrides School



7. The Forest Ave. Comeunity Fridge is a group from Mariners Harbor looking to help out our community with Food Insecurity.

#### @FORESTAVECOMEUNITYFRIDGE

#### WHO ARE WE?

We are a collaborative group, born and raised on the North Shore, who are passionate about addressing the health food disparity in our neighborhood of Mariners Harbor. The foundation of our initiative is "take what you need, leave what you don't" and "we keep us fed and healthy!" – in hopes of creating a culture of unity, interdependence, community restoration and empowerment in Mariners Harbor.

#### WHAT IS A COMMUNITY FRIDGE?

A Community Fridge is a fridge that provides free and healthy food for community members. The fridges offer access to fresh produce, healthy grains and perishable items to communities that do not have a lot of access to healthy food options.



#### **HOW CAN MY BUSINESS HELP?**

Your business can help by donating surplus food to our fridge or allowing us to purchase food at reduced costs.

# WHY SHOULD MY BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION CARE ABOUT A COMMUNITY FRIDGE?

In recent political and racial events, many businesses and organizations are looking for ways to fight against racial inequity. Community fridges represent mutual aid – the idea that solidarity not charity is what communities need in order to become fairer and stronger. By donating food to our fridge, your business will be taking part in our ongoing movement for creating justice – first within our communities.

# 8. UAU Mommy & Me Paint & Sippy Cup



Sincerely,

Charles D. Fall Member of Assembly ALBANY OFFICE: Room 534, Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY 12248. 518-455-4677, FAX 518-455-5946
DISTRICT OFFICE: 853 Forest Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10310. 718-442-9932,

FAX 718-442-9942