



Liz Krueger

STATE SENATOR | 28th District



Dear Neighbor,

This email contains several updates about what I have been up to in Albany this month, as well as some upcoming events and useful information. The most important news out of Albany is that, as of this past Tuesday, we finally have a state budget for fiscal year 2023-24. You can read details about the budget and much more below.

Stay safe and healthy. As always, if you have any questions or need assistance, please email or call my office at lkrueger@nysenate.gov or 212-490-9535.

Best,

Liz Krueger
State Senator

The State Budget Passes

On May 2nd, the Legislature passed the state budget for FY 23-24. In spite of the budget being a month late, I am proud that the Senate Majority stood strong during the budget negotiation process to deliver real victories for the people of New York.

This year's budget increases equity, affordability, and quality of life for all New Yorkers through historic education funding, and investments in transportation and healthcare services, both for patients and those working to provide care. It focuses on New York families through investments in childcare and expansion of the Child Tax Credit, as well as increasing protections for New Yorkers seeking abortion care. It makes our tax system fairer, ensures our cannabis laws can be properly enforced, and, critically, retains New York's position as a leader in confronting the climate crisis through historic steps to implement the CLCPA.

There is always more work to be done and compromises that have to be made, but this is a budget that provides a solid foundation to continue building a better future for our state and our people.

The FY 2024 enacted budget includes:

Strengthening Our Public Schools and Higher Education:

- **Supporting New York's K-12 Education:** The budget is fully funding Foundation Aid for public schools for the first time, and the Senate secured the largest annual School Aid allocation of \$34.5 billion.
- **Expanding Free School Meals:** In a groundbreaking victory, the Senate won \$135 million to cover school meals, helping ensure that no student goes hungry

during the school day.

- **Bolstering SUNY and CUNY:** The Senate successfully halted any increases to in-state tuition across these higher ed systems, and procured increases in general operating aid for SUNY of \$103 million and for CUNY of \$53 million. An additional \$435 million in flexible capital funding was negotiated for CUNY for a total of \$1.1 billion, and an additional \$170 million in capital funding for SUNY for a total of \$1.9 billion. Additionally, this budget secures \$50 million for transformational initiatives at CUNY.

Combating Climate Change & Protecting the Environment:

- **Improving the Climate Cap-and-Invest Program:** The budget includes provisions to direct the spending of any proceeds from any emission reduction programs established by the state to ensure that consumers receive rebates and to make the state more resilient against climate risk.
- **Implementing the All-Electric New Buildings Act:** The budget requires the Building and Energy codes to prohibit the installation of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems in new buildings starting December 31, 2025 for new buildings of seven stories or less, and December 31, 2028 for all new buildings regardless of size or building type. Exemptions are provided for agricultural buildings, manufacturing and industrial uses, restaurants, hospitals, car washes, power stations, and laundromats. This provision does not ban currently existing gas stoves, nor does it prevent the replacement of current gas stoves, or the installation of new gas stoves in existing buildings.
- **Strengthening the Build Public Renewables Act:** The budget empowers NYPA to direct, plan, build, and operate renewable energy projects to support the state in meeting generation targets in the CLCPA and the Climate Action Council's Scoping plan. It also seeks to provide adequate and reliable supply of renewable energy and capacity in the state, and support the REACH program to give low and middle-income bill credits from the proceeds of Renewable Projects.
- **Environmental Protection Fund:** New York State has allocated \$400 million for capital projects that protect the environment and enhance communities, including funding environmental justice, municipal parks and recycling, and land acquisition.
- **Clean Water Infrastructure:** The budget includes \$500 million for the Clean Water and Infrastructure Act.
- **Lead Paint Registry:** This requires the Department of Health to coordinate with the Division of Housing and Community Renewal on the establishment of the registry, requires an audit of at least 10% of homes in the registry, permits homeowners to self-certify on the status of lead inspection, makes violations subject to enforcement actions within public health law, requires DOH to set standards for inspectors, and establishes a program sunset after three years.

Expanding Access to Healthcare, Mental Health Treatment & Social Services:

- **Standing Up as a Destination State for Reproductive Care:** As federal attacks on reproductive freedoms continue, New York is allocating \$100.7 million to fund abortion providers. The budget also expands access to abortion care for SUNY and CUNY students, as well as to contraception by authorizing pharmacists to dispense self-administered hormonal contraceptives from a non-patient specific order at local pharmacies. It also takes timely steps to protect the data of patients

seeking reproductive care, and increases the Medicaid reimbursement rate specifically for abortion services.

- **Investing in Mental Health:** This year, New York will be making one of the largest investments in mental health in a generation, \$1 billion for transforming the continuum of care by increasing inpatient psychiatric treatment capacity, dramatically expanding outpatient services, boosting insurance coverage, and holding health insurance companies accountable.
- **Supporting New Yorkers with Disabilities:** By expanding the Medicaid Buy-In Program for working people with disabilities, funding and reinvigorating the Interagency Coordinating Council for Services to Persons who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing and increasing the number of Civil Service Section 55-B positions to grow the representation of those with disabilities in the state workforce we will be able to support some our most vulnerable population.
- **Strengthening Distressed Providers:** The budget allocates \$500 million to support additional aid for distressed providers, casting a lifeline to the safety net hospitals that are often the last venues for care in underserved communities. This budget also reserves \$35 million to support 340B funded entities.
- **Revitalizing Medicaid:** The 2023-2024 budget includes \$1 billion in health care capital funding and expanded Medicaid coverage for more than 7.8 million low-income New Yorkers, including a significant rate increase of 7.5% for in-patient hospital services and 6.5% for out-patient hospital services, nursing homes, and other providers.

Boosting Funding to Spur Economic Development & Support Small Businesses and the Arts:

- **Helping Small Businesses Grow:** This budget allocates over \$12 million in Legislative Grants for businesses, including the creation of a matching grant program for the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer grant programs. It also includes language to create a new entrepreneurial training grant pilot program for entrepreneurs successfully finishing training at ESD's Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers and allocates \$400,000 for the program.
- **Restoring Funding for Arts and Cultural Institutions:** The adopted budget increased funding for the New York State Council on the Arts by \$50 million for a total of \$92.8 million, and added \$20 million in capital funding for the arts.
- **Supporting Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises:** The New York Senate Democrats are continuing to support MWBEs by securing an additional \$1.4 million for the MWBE Development Lending Program from the Executive Proposal, for a total of \$2 million.
- **Boosting Demand for New York Food and Products:** This budget includes \$10 million to support the establishment of farm markets, supermarkets and food cooperatives in underserved communities; and \$50 million over five years to local school districts to support New York State farm products in meals for K-12 school children.

Supporting Working People and Families:

- **Raising the Minimum Wage:** The budget increases the state minimum wage by \$2 over the next three years, after which it will increase at a rate determined by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), giving hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who earn minimum wage a pay increase to keep with rising costs of living.

- **Strengthening Child Care Resources:** This budget implements new comprehensive programs to ensure high-quality, affordable child care, including \$500 million towards a Workforce Retention Grant Program and \$25 million to support the Employer Child Care Tax Credit.
- **Expanding Child Tax Credit:** This includes language that will make this tax credit available to families with children from ages zero to four. This will allow approximately 584,000 more households to claim the credit, benefitting 993,500 adults and 993,700 children in those households.
- **Lower Personal Income Tax:** This budget would continue a phase in of the lowest personal income tax rates for working and middle class families making it the lowest it has been in over 70 years.
- **Wage increase for O-Agency Workers:** This would increase the cost of living adjustments from the Executive's proposed 2.5% to 4% for employees in OTDA, OPWDD, NYSOFA, OCFS, DOH and OMH.

Investing in Transforming Our Transportation Infrastructure:

- **Helping to save the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA):** The budget adjusts the Payroll Mobility Tax on the largest businesses within New York City to 0.6%, generating approximately \$1.1 billion annually for the MTA. The budget also appropriates \$300 million in one-time State Aid, and requires New York City to contribute \$165 million for paratransit services funding. Lastly, it reduces the proposed MTA fare increase so that services remain affordable to the everyday riders who rely on these services. Over the next year, the MTA will be significantly increasing midday, evening, and weekend subway frequencies on multiple lines, and launching a pilot program providing five free bus routes in New York City to improve access across the Five Boroughs.
- **Improving Rural Roadways:** The Senate achieved \$20 million in additional funds for Upstate STOA funding, for a total of \$306.6 million, a 14.6 percent increase from last year. The Senate also won \$60 million in capital funding for CHIPS for a total of \$598 million, and \$40 million in capital for State Touring Routes for a total of \$140 million.

Bolstering Investments in Public Safety:

- **Securing Our Streets from Weapons of War:** The Senate continues to fund evidence-based gun violence reduction programs, with this budget allocating \$347 million to such initiatives.
- **Strengthening the Enforcement Powers of the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) and Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF):** In order to combat the rise in unlicensed cannabis shops and support the the legal marketplace for cannabis, the Budget substantially expands the authority of OCM and DTF to inspect and shut down illegal retail operators.
- **Combating Hate Crimes and Anti-AAPI Violence:** New York State will be providing \$30 million for Asian American Pacific Islander equity budget coalition priorities for crisis intervention initiatives and community based programs to combat hate crimes.
- **Clarifying Procedures and Upholding Criminal Justice Reforms:** The budget allocates \$160 million to support the implementation of discovery reform for prosecutors and defenders, along with \$50 million in capital for discovery technology improvements in New York City. It also provides for \$92 million for aid for prosecution and defense funding throughout New York.

Increasing Housing Access for New York's Families:

- **Protecting Homeowners and Buyers:** The budget secures \$40 million for the Homeowner Protection Program, \$25 million for a First-Time Homeowners Program, and \$10 million for Land Banks.
- **Supporting Affordable Housing:** The Senate won the inclusion of \$391 million for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to address pandemic-era arrears for public housing residents and subsidized housing tenants who were left out from previous rounds of rental assistance.

Senate Passes Tropical Deforestation-Free Procurement Act



On April 25th, as part of a broad Earth Day bill package, the Senate passed the [New York Tropical Deforestation-Free Procurement Act \(S.4859/A.5682\)](#), which I carried. The bill would close loopholes in an existing 30-yr old ban on the use of tropical hardwoods by state agencies and municipalities, and would require state contractors whose products contain certain tropical forest-risk commodities to certify that their products are not driving deforestation. The legislation, which would also create a Supply Chain Transparency Assistance Program to help small businesses, is carried in the Assembly by Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski.

Tropical forests harbor close to 50 percent of all species on Earth. Those species are now going extinct at a rate that is at least 100 to 1,000 times higher than historical levels, due to human activity. In addition, an estimated 30 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from deforestation and forest degradation. Taking into account carbon sequestration potential, stopping the loss of tropical forests, mangroves, and wetlands could provide over 20 percent of necessary climate mitigation by 2030.

Globally, an estimated 18,000,000 acres of forest, an area more than half the size of New York State, are lost every year to deforestation according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with over one-half of Earth's tropical forests already gone. At the current pace, the entirety of Earth's tropical rainforests will be degraded or destroyed within the next 100 years.

Loss of biodiversity resulting from forest degradation and deforestation, as well as human encroachment on formerly undisturbed ecosystems, also increases the risks of zoonotic disease pandemics such as COVID-19.

The New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act would help to ensure that New York State government procurement does not drive tropical deforestation or degradation by tightening an existing state ban on the use of tropical hardwoods for government projects, and creating a new statute requiring state contractors who deal in forest-risk commodities to certify that their products don't drive deforestation. New York would be the first state in the nation to implement such a policy, following in the footsteps of the European Union, which recently enacted economy-wide deforestation regulations.

Many businesses throughout the United States and across the world are already increasingly engaged in efforts to ensure their supply chains are transparent, traceable, ethical, and environmentally sound, whether in reaction to consumer pressure or government regulation, or out of an understanding of corporate social responsibility. Businesses that achieve ethical and sustainable supply chains may also be able to increase their appeal with certain consumers, charge premium prices, or access previously untapped markets as a result of their efforts.

In order to remain competitive, New York businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses and minority- and women-owned businesses, must be able to take advantage of and stay ahead of this socially responsible and beneficial trend. The proposed Supply Chain Transparency Assistance Program, administered by Empire State Development, would be available to New York-based small and medium-sized businesses, as well as MWBEs, to help them establish more ethical and sustainable supply chains, while ensuring they have the tools they need to compete in the national and global marketplace.

The days are long past when New Yorkers can pretend that what goes on in another part of the world has no impact on us. The Tropical Deforestation-Free Procurement Act will ensure that New York's taxpayer dollars are not driving the tropical deforestation that contributes to the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, and the plundering of Indigenous lands across the globe. It puts New York at the forefront of a global movement to end humanity's self-destructive level of deforestation. At the same time, we can give New York businesses a leg up on the competition by helping them clean up their supply chains. It's a win-win-win for people, planet, and New York's economy.

Pushing for Legislation to Protect Access to Reproductive Telehealth Services



On April 13th, I joined my legislative colleagues and advocates for a Press Conference to rally for A.1709A/ S.1066A that would provide explicit protections for doctors and medical providers, and facilitators serving patients seeking abortion and reproductive health services via telehealth. The legislation, which has already passed the Senate, would protect clinicians mailing abortion pills to patients in states with abortion restrictions from extradition, arrest, and legal proceedings, and support access to abortion, a fundamental right, for those living in and outside of New York State.

[Click Here to Watch My Comments at the Press Conference](#)

Liz Krueger's 2023 Virtual Roundtable for Boomers and Seniors



Session V: "Older Adult Housing: We Need More!"

How to Advocate for What Is Needed”

Thursday, May 11th 10 am – 11:30 pm

New York City’s 65 plus population grew by 36 percent over the last decade, making it even harder to find affordable accessible apartments. This **final session of the 2023 Roundtable series** will focus on some of the challenges to creating more housing, and how to harness the growing power of older adults to advocate for change.

On **Thursday, May 11th 10 am – 11:30 am**, the Roundtable will feature:

- Rachel Fee, Executive Director, New York Housing Conference
- Kevin Kiproviski, Director of Public Policy, LiveOn NY
- Kevin Jones, Associate State Director, Advocacy, NYS AARP

You will have the **option of joining the event online through Zoom**, a webinar hosting service.

You will also have the **option to view the event online through Facebook**. Please note that **you do not need a Facebook account or profile** to view the event through Facebook.

If you do not have access to a computer, tablet, or other electronic device, **you can listen in by telephone**.

****If you register for an event, a confirmation email with the Zoom link and the call-in information will be sent at least a week in advance of the event.****

The event will feature a **question and answer session** with Rachel Fee, Kevin Kiproviski, and Kevin Jones. If you want to know about the challenges to creating affordable and accessible housing, and how to advocate to get more units built, join us at the May 11th Roundtable. Attendees will be able to submit questions through Zoom and Facebook during the event but are **strongly** encouraged to submit them in advance.

Please let us know if you plan to attend the Thursday, May 11th Virtual Roundtable and RSVP to <https://tinyurl.com/5-11-23-Senior-Roundtable>.

Click Here to RSVP for the May 11th Roundtable

Rent Reduction Workshop

Are you a Rent Stabilized or Rent Controlled tenant? Are you experiencing a decrease in services and repairs? You may be eligible to apply for a rent reduction. Join Tenants & Neighbors and NYS Homes & Community Renewal Deputy Commissioner Woody Pascal on May 11th at 6:30 pm for a Rent Reductions training!

Come learn the process and how to file a rent reduction application with HCR’s Office of Rent Administration for your individual apartment or building-wide decrease in services and repairs.

[Register by clicking here.](#)

To register over the phone or if you have any questions please contact Christine at cshimizu@tandn.org or (212) 608-4320 ext.311.

HCR RENT REDUCTIONS **WORKSHOP**



Homes and
Community Renewal

TENANTS & NEIGHBORS



The Statewide Center of Power for Tenants



Thursday
May 11th
Time
06:30 PM

Are you receiving a lack of services or maintenance?

Join us on Zoom to learn how to apply for a rent reduction from HCR!

SPEAKER :

Woody Pascal

*HCR Deputy
Commissioner*

**Interested?
Contact Christine at:**

212-608-4320 ext. 311
and
cshimizu@tandn.org

LIVE WEBINAR

New - Schedule an Appointment with HPD Code Enforcement

You can now schedule an appointment online to speak with a representative from HPD's Code Enforcement office either virtually or by telephone. While they pilot this

new service, they are offering a limited number of time slots. They may adjust the number of time slots offered based on demand.

Services Available by Appointment

1. Complaints
2. Violations (certifications)
3. Dismissal Request
4. Mold/Pest (documentation to remove violations)
5. Lead Violations (Defect Status, Exemptions, and Contestations)

For more info and to schedule an appointment, go to:

<https://hpdcode.timetap.com/#/>

2023 Rent Guidelines Board Meetings and Hearings

The NYC Rent Guidelines Board is meeting before they determine the permitted rent increases for rent stabilized apartments. The final determination will not be made until June. The Preliminary Vote was held on May 2nd, and a public meeting will be held on May 25th at 9:30am. It is possible that more public meetings might be called in June.

To keep up to date on the meetings (which will be live-streamed), please follow this link: <https://rentguidelinesboard.cityofnewyork.us/meetings/2023-meetings-and-hearings/>

Monthly SCRIE Clinics in CM Erik Bottcher's Office

FREEZE YOUR RENT!

WANT TO STOP YOUR RENT FROM INCREASING?

Eligible New Yorkers can get free, one-on-one support from the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit to enroll in NYC's rent freeze and homeowner tax exemption programs.

**Every 2nd Thursday
of the Month
10:30am - 5:00pm**

DISTRICT OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER

224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

[Click Here to Register for a SCRIE Clinic Appointment](#)

NYC DEP Internship Program

NYC DEP offers paid and unpaid undergraduate and graduate internships year-round in a variety of fields during the fall, spring, and summer sessions.

This page will list open positions when available. Students that are interested in a position should apply as soon as possible, as applications are often reviewed on a rolling basis: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dep/about/internship-opportunities.page>

For answers to commonly asked questions about DEP internships, visit [Internship Opportunities FAQs](#).

I Love My Parks Day at Four Freedoms State Park

Saturday, May 6th, is I Love My Park Day, a popular annual event that brings thousands of volunteers together to enhance and celebrate New York State's amazing parkland.

Parks & Trails New York, in partnership with New York State Parks and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), will provide the opportunity for volunteers to participate in cleanup events at over 120 state parks, historic sites and public lands from Long Island to Western New York and covering all regions in between. From beach clean-ups to trail restoration and tree and flower plantings, hundreds of events are planned to spruce up our parks and get them ready for the summer season.

You can participate at Four Freedoms State Park from 10am to 1pm.

- Assemble colorful Adirondack chairs and arrange them on the garden lawn.
- Stone Maintenance: add, spread, and rinse pea gravel around Copper Beeches. Involves raking of stones.
- Horticulture, tree pit maintenance: a) Hand-pull weeds from Linden Tree pits and spread mulch to cover irrigation tubing. b) Rake and mulch around welcome booth and Ruin fence line.

All ages welcome. [Click here to REGISTER.](#)

2023 Community and Citywide Education Council Election

Time for parents of public school children to elect their representatives to the Community Education Council (CEC). The CEC represents parents of District 2 students in pre-K through 8. Voting in the current elections is ongoing and online through through May 9th.

Please follow this link for details and information: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families/Community-and-citywide-education-councils-cecs/elections-2023-community-and-citywide-education-councils>

Search & Care Seeks Part-Time Chaperones

Search and Care, a nonprofit serving older adults on the UWS and UES, seeks reliable Manhattan-based vaccinated adults to safely accompany their clients to/from healthcare appointments. Bilingual a plus. Hourly compensation per escort. Please email with your relevant interest and/or experience to strashun@searchandcare.org.



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