



NEWS

From Bill Magnarelli

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State Budget Moves New York Forward

By Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli

The \$153.1 billion 2017-18 state budget that invests in public education, funds a first-in-the-nation free tuition plan to help students go to college, Raises the Age to give kids a second chance, expands ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft and makes a significant commitment to ensuring every New Yorker has clean drinking water was passed by the Legislature on April 9th.

This year's state budget is so much more than a spending plan – it's a detailed blueprint to move our state forward. From making sure the wealthy pay their fair share, to strengthening our kids' education, to finally 'Raising the Age,' this budget continues our progress and proves we're committed to innovation, opportunity and supporting those that need a helping hand. This budget funds our shared New York values.

Investing in our schools and our children

The 2017-18 state budget increases education aid by \$1 billion for a total of \$25.7 billion, a 4.1 percent increase from last year's budget, reaffirming the Assembly Majority's unrelenting commitment to putting every student on their path to success. The budget also increases Foundation Aid by \$700 million for a total of \$17.2 billion.

Education is the great equalizer, but to make that a reality we need to keep funding our schools. This year's state budget does just that – it invests in our children and eliminates barriers so that every student can get an education that helps shape their future.

The budget includes a \$50 million increase in Community Schools Aid for a total of \$150 million. This funding allows schools to be converted into community schools that deliver valuable services to both students and families, including offering critical support to at-risk children and strengthening neighborhoods.

Additionally, the budget provides:

- \$817 million in total funding for prekindergarten programs;
- \$35 million for after-school programs;
- \$5 million to expand half-day and full-day prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds in high-need school districts;
- \$2 million for Advance Placement (AP) Test Assistance;
- \$2 million for the Master Teachers Program;
- \$400,000 for Excellence in Teaching Awards; and
- \$300,000 for cyberbullying prevention.
- \$1 million to restore funding for adult literacy education, for a total of \$7.3 million; and
- \$1.2 million for regional community schools technical centers.



Assemblymembers Magnarelli, Al Stirpe and Pam Hunter met with students from the OnPoint for College program in Albany.

Protecting public libraries

The final budget restores \$9 million of aid to public libraries, which was not included in the Executive's Budget, to ensure they can continue to provide services and resources to residents, for a total of \$95.6 million. In addition, the budget provides an increase of \$10 million in capital funding for a total of \$24 million.

Implementing the Excelsior Scholarship, supporting state colleges and universities

The 2017-18 state budget makes a substantial investment in SUNY schools and helps expand access to higher education through scholarship and opportunity programs.

The state budget provides funding to establish the Excelsior Scholarship, a groundbreaking, first-of-its-kind initiative to make SUNY schools tuition-free for New Yorkers who earn less than \$125,000 annually. Students who attend a private college in New York and earn less than \$125,000 annually would also be eligible for a scholarship award of \$6,000, so long as the private college meets certain requirements.

The new program will be phased in over three years, beginning for New Yorkers making up to \$100,000 annually in the fall of 2017, increasing to \$110,000 in 2018, and reaching \$125,000 in 2019. Students must be enrolled in college full-time and average 30 credits per year (including Summer and January semesters) in order to receive the funding. However, the program has built in flexibility so that any student facing hardship is able to pause and restart the program, or take fewer credits one semester than another.

Students are required to maintain a grade point average necessary for the successful completion of their coursework, and, as the program makes a major investment in the state's greatest asset – our young people – students will be required to live and work in-state for the same number of years after graduation as they received the scholarship while in school.

Combating the heroin epidemic

Despite increased media attention and legislative action, the heroin and opioid epidemic continues to rage in communities across New York State. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of heroin- and opioid-related deaths increased by 47 percent.

The 2017-18 state budget increases funding by \$43 million over last year – for a total of \$213 million – to fight the heroin epidemic and increase access to treatment for New Yorkers struggling with a substance abuse disorder. This funding supports a variety of treatment and prevention programs, including family support navigators, peer supports, recovery clubhouses and community coalitions, and \$10 million in additional capital support to increase the number of beds in in-patient treatment facilities.

Investing in clean water, rebuilding crumbling infrastructure

The budget provides \$2.5 billion for water infrastructure to help ensure clean drinking water by repairing and replacing old pipes and water mains, as well as preventive measures, such as source water land acquisition, to keep water from becoming polluted.

“We should never have to worry that the water coming out of our faucets and drinking fountains is anything but safe for our children. Contaminated, dirty water can have devastating long-term effects, causing illnesses and hurting development, and we need to prevent that. We have to be proactive on something this important,” said Assemblyman Magnarelli.

Creating jobs, investing in economic development

The Excelsior Jobs Program offers incentives for businesses to expand in and relocate to New York State by providing tax credits to firms making a substantial commitment to growth through either increased employment or through capital investment in a New York facility. However, the program is highly underutilized due to impractical thresholds for job creation and capital investment that firms must meet in order to qualify for the tax credits. The budget makes more businesses eligible for the incentives to relocate and invest in New York by making the thresholds more realistic and attainable.

Additionally, under current law, participants in the Excelsior Jobs Program are eligible for a research and development tax credit for eligible expenditures. The budget doubles the cap, allowing businesses to further take advantage of the program as well as expand their ability to grow and create jobs.

And to help ensure workers have the skills needed for good, available jobs, the budget expands the Employee Training Incentive Credit Program to make it easier for companies to include worker training as part of their expansion projects. It also extends the Youth Works Job Program for five years with \$50 million in funding, with \$10 million dedicated to an apprenticeship program.

Further, the budget provides \$70 million for the Restore New York Communities Initiative, which helps municipalities revitalize commercial and residential properties and transform neighborhoods. It also provides \$385 million for the State and Municipal Facilities Program to improve infrastructure, enhance neighborhoods and make vital improvements to our communities.



Assemblyman Magnarelli recently met with Syracuse United Steelworkers and Wendy Colucci, of the CNY Labor Federation, at his Albany Office.

“Peter Falk’s Law” Passes Family members can be alerted to loved one’s wellbeing



Catherine Falk and Craig Swiecki, Legislative Director for Assemblyman Magnarelli, at Syracuse University’s Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics.

A law named in honor of Peter Falk, who played television detective “Colombo”, has passed in New York State allowing family members to be notified of changes in an incapacitated patient’s healthcare and his or her death, funeral and burial arrangements. “Peter Falk’s Law”, A.3461-C (Chapter 98 of 2016) was named in honor of the late actor and Syracuse University Alum. His daughter Catherine (also an SU Alum) brought the issue to Assemblyman Magnarelli’s attention in 2013. When Peter became ill, his second wife denied Catherine and her sister visitation. She did not notify them of changes in his condition, and failed to notify them about his death and funeral arrangements. Catherine Falk has now become an advocate for elder abuse prevention and guardianship reform. Catherine returned to Syracuse University on April 17th to speak to students about her father’s story and her activism on this issue.

Save the Date

FREE E- Recycle Event

Saturday, July 29, Destiny USA,

CNY Volunteer Fair

Tuesday, Sept. 19, Destiny USA (third floor Canyon area)

CNY Veterans Parade & Expo

9 a.m.- 3 p.m. **Saturday, Nov. 4, NYS Fair Center of Progress building**

Raising the Age

The budget includes a measure to ensure young people who encounter New York’s criminal justice system are treated fairly and given a better chance to turn their lives around. Raise the Age, which raises the age of criminal responsibility in New York from 16 to 18 years old, is an issue the Assembly Majority has championed for more than 12 years.

“Raising the Age for teenagers is not about letting them off the hook for the crimes they commit, but acknowledging that many teens make mistakes, not because they are bad people, but because they are kids, and they often don’t know better and can’t fully appreciate the consequences of their actions. If we truly want to reduce crime and increase safety, we need to give them a greater chance of turning their lives around and learning from their mistakes. It should be noted, however, that 16 to 18 year olds will still be treated as adults for serious felonies and sexual offenses, such as murder and rape.

Beginning Oct. 1, 2018, the new law prohibits imprisoning young people under the age of 17 in county jails. Beginning Oct. 1, 2019, this applies to young people under the age of 18. When pretrial detention is necessary, they will be held in local youth detention facilities certified by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Young people age 16 or 17 charged and convicted as adults for serious crimes and sentenced to incarceration will be held in a youth-only facility operated by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) with special programming and services provided by OCFS. The new state budget provides \$4.6 million in funding for local detention centers statewide to fund necessary upgrades.

Expanding ride-hailing across the state

The state budget allows ride-hailing services to operate throughout the state starting in July.

Ride-hailing applications such as Uber and Lyft offer a convenient, predictable transportation option. They allow customers to know the price beforehand and pay digitally so they never have to worry about having enough cash on hand.

The law requires that ride-hailing companies:

- obtain a license to operate from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) after providing proof of insurance;
- conduct a criminal background check on all potential drivers, including a review of the NYS Sex Offender Registry and the U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website;
- provide digital networks that display a picture of the driver and the make, model, color and license plate number of the vehicle before the passenger enters it;
- do not accept cash payment or solicit or accept street hails;
- implement a “zero-tolerance policy” regarding drug and alcohol use;
- adopt a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of destination, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age and sexual orientation; and
- implement and maintain a policy of providing accessibility to passengers with a disability and the accommodation of service animals.

About New York State Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli

Assemblyman William Magnarelli represents the 129th Assembly District, which includes the Northside, Westside, Eastwood Valley and Downtown areas of the City of Syracuse, as well as the towns of Geddes and Van Buren. He first won election in 1998 for an open Assembly seat and was reelected in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016. During his terms in office, Assemblyman Magnarelli has focused his efforts on bringing more jobs to Central New York, lowering taxes, providing our children a better education at every level, improving our healthcare and keeping our families safe. For more information, contact Assemblyman Magnarelli’s District Office at (315) 428-9651 or visit <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/magnarelli>.