



New York State Association of Area Agencies on Aging

272 Broadway
Albany, NY 12204
Ph. 518-449-7080
Fax 518-449-7055
office@nysaaaa.org
www.nysaaaa.org

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State of the State Governor George Pataki

Governor Pataki delivered his 11th State of the State address to a joint session of the state Legislature today, January 5, 2005. The Governor's State of the State address marks the official opening of the 228th annual session of New York's Legislature. Enormous fiscal challenges loom, as the state faces a projected gap between revenues and expenditures of about \$6 billion if budget cuts aren't made or new revenues found. In addition, the Governor and the Legislature are facing a possible court order to add \$5.6 billion annually over the next four years to help improve New York City's schools.

Here are some of the highlights from the Governor's address:

NATIONAL GUARD

- Build on Patriot Plan laws and pass a law ensuring that the families of all public employees serving in the Guard and Reserves who make the ultimate sacrifice will receive the same benefits they would have received had they been lost as a firefighter in the line of duty.

CRIME

- Launch Operation IMPACT II to concentrate federal, state and local law enforcement on communities in 15 upstate counties experiencing spikes in crime. Operation IMPACT II will expand the program within the original IMPACT counties, add 100 more State Troopers to this effort, and bring new IMPACT operations to other parts of the State.
- Launch Project SAF-T -- Statewide Anti-Fugitive Teams -- to track down and capture New York's 100 most dangerous fugitive felons.
- Create the "New York's 100 Most Wanted" program, posting their mug shots on a public website and providing them to every police department in New York. When a citizen spots one of these fugitives, they'll be able to make an anonymous tip through a dedicated hotline.

- Provide an aggressive anti-crime package, dealing with issues ranging from deadly drivers and gun trafficking to strengthening Megan's Law and ensuring that our state has a strong death penalty law.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Establish the nation's first State Preparedness Training Center, centrally located in the Mohawk Valley.
- Submit a Terrorism III package that will include legislation dealing with two critically important areas - cyber-terrorism and agri-terrorism.
- Redouble efforts to ensure that federal homeland security funds are concentrated on the areas under the greatest threat, i.e. New York City.

JOBS

- IBM -- along with six global giants that include Sony, Toshiba, and Samsung -- will invest \$1.9 billion to build the next generation chip plant, in the Hudson Valley.
- In Albany, at the Center of Excellence in Nanoelectronics, ASML, the world's leading chip equipment manufacturer, will invest over \$325 million to create its first-ever R & D center outside of Europe. Also, at the Albany Center of Excellence, IBM and a consortium of the largest nanoelectronics equipment suppliers will fund a \$450 million expansion of that center's R & D capabilities.
- In Grand Island, Invitrogen will expand its operations in collaboration with the Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics, and in Buffalo, American Pharmaceutical Partners will add another 130 jobs.
- In Fulton and Seneca Falls, the Governor is working with the Syracuse Center of Excellence to establish two new ethanol facilities. In Fulton, the old Miller brewery is set to become the largest producer of ethanol in the East.
- The Governor will propose Operation SPUR - the Strategic Partnership for Upstate Revitalization. This initiative will target upstate communities where additional economic growth and job creation are needed, as well as areas that rely heavily on the farming and agribusiness sectors. In the Executive Budget, the Governor will propose a seven-point plan that will marshal resources to revitalize these SPUR communities.

TAXES

- Expand Earned Income Tax Credit to include lower income, single fathers.
- Enact STAR Plus
- Accelerate the phase-out of the temporary personal income tax increase for all New Yorkers this year.
- Reform New York's tax code for the 21st century, led by Larry Kudlow.
- Propose Medicaid reforms that will reduce costs and protect county property taxpayers, while ensuring quality health care

SENIORS

“Over the last decade, we've made bold changes that instituted a new approach to health care in New York -one that empowers people to make the decisions that affect their

health and their lives. We've given New Yorkers and their doctors more options and taken decisions out of the hands of government bureaucrats.

This new approach, and the innovative new programs we've enacted have improved the delivery and quality of health care across our great state.

Today, over a million more New Yorkers have access to quality comprehensive health care, more seniors than ever before have prescription drug coverage, and four times as many children are covered by Child Health Plus.

This year, let's continue to be bold. Let's build on these unprecedented changes and make our healthcare system even better with initiatives to improve the health of our oldest and youngest New Yorkers.

First, let's ensure that our "Greatest Generation" can live in comfort, security and dignity, whether it is on their own, with their families, or in residential care. For some New Yorkers, a nursing home may be the best option, but it should never be the only option. This session, let's give even more seniors and their families access to a wider variety of long-term care options.

For an older or disabled person, a simple ramp or other modification can sometimes mean the difference between living at home or entering a nursing home. This year we'll launch Access to Home - a program to help families make the home improvements needed to accommodate the needs of their loved ones.”

HEALTH CARE

- Improve no-cost newborn screening program
- Introduce "Active-8 Kids" program, a comprehensive education and awareness campaign encouraging kids to be active, healthy and physically fit.
- Propose a new program to fund facility improvements and technology upgrades for healthcare facilities across the State.

EDUCATION

- More dollars must come with sweeping reforms to ensure greater accountability and performance. The Governor will again advance a proposal to provide “fair funding and real reform for school districts across New York State.”

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

- The State has reached an agreement with Domtar Industries that will preserve another 104,000 acres of Adirondack forestland.
- In Yonkers, the Governor proposes to uncover the Nepperhan River, which has been flowing under a shroud of pavement for more than a century.
- The Governor signed an Executive Order requiring all state agencies and authorities to begin using non-toxic cleaning products that are free of harmful chemicals and later this session, will submit legislation that requires all schools in the State to do the same.
- The Governor will sign an Executive Order requiring state agencies to begin phasing in the use of bio-fuels to heat state buildings and power trucks.
- The Governor will ask NYSERDA to work with transportation agencies to install hydrogen refueling stations from New York City to Buffalo, over the next ten years.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

- Enact legislation imposing a smart and effective ban on procurement lobbying.
- Advance legislation to impose a ban on all gifts from lobbyists.
- Introduce an authority reform bill to put these model principles into law, and to remove any remaining barriers to full compliance for all of our authorities. Establish a new, broadly inclusive Commission on Public Authority Reform headed by Ira Millstein.
- Elimination or consolidation of hundreds of commissions, task forces, boards and authorities that have been established over the course of many decades.
- Enact a real budget reform bill that opens up the process, empowers individual legislators and ensures balanced and ontime budgets.