



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins Guides Passage of 2025–26 State Budget

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 9, 2025

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**Budget Delivers Critical Relief for Families and Communities Across Westchester and Beyond** (*Albany, NY*) — Under the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the New York State Senate on Thursday approved the State Fiscal Year 2025–26 budget.

The enacted budget provides meaningful tax relief by lowering middle-class rates, expanding the child tax credit, and delivering direct utility savings – measures designed to ease the cost

of living for hardworking Westchester families. It also preserves core services and advances new initiatives, including a pilot housing access voucher program, universal free school meals, and long-overdue investments in public transit infrastructure.

“Today’s budget represents a sustained and proactive investment that lays the groundwork for our long-term economic security,” **said Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins**. “By uniting the Senate, the Governor’s Office, and the Assembly under a common vision, we’ve secured vital resources that will keep our schools strong, our children fed, our veterans respected, our communities safe, and our environment resilient. I’m proud to stand with my colleagues in delivering these results for the families I’m honored to represent in Westchester and for every New Yorker counting on us to help secure a more affordable future in our great state.”

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins in collaboration with Governor Kathy Hochul, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and her legislative colleagues, delivered targeted investments in housing, healthcare, public safety, and environmental stewardship, strengthening communities throughout Westchester County and New York State, including an allocation of \$340 million for full universal school meals statewide.

Additional key statewide priorities of the 2025–26 State Budget include:

- **Middle-Class Tax Cuts:** New rate reductions that expand relief for working households.
- **Expanded Child Tax Credit:** Enhanced support to help parents manage essential expenses.
- **Affordable Housing Investments:** Funding for a housing access voucher pilot program, plus down-payment assistance for first-time buyers.
- **Utility Cost Reductions:** Measures to cap broadband and energy fees, lowering monthly bills.

- **Public Transit Modernization:** Critical funding to keep buses and subways running reliably, with upgrades that benefit commuters.
- **Bell-to-Bell Cell Phone Ban:** Reclaiming classroom time and limiting distractions for our kids; a step to restore focus and improve learning outcomes across the state.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins worked to deliver a fiscally responsible package that addresses the immediate needs of New York families while preparing the State for future challenges. With the administration in Washington, D.C. creating uncertainty surrounding funding for federal programs which are crucial for families in New York and nationwide, the budget helps better position New York to meet current and potential future challenges.

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