State Senator Liz Krueger's
Albany Update | September 2025

Dear Neighbor,

This Albany Update provides an overview of the 2025 NY State Legislative Session and the 2025-26 State Budget. This was a busy session, so what is included below is only a partial list of key legislation. I have focused on bills that passed both houses of the Legislature and have either been signed into law or are awaiting action by the Governor. Bills that have been acted on by the Governor have their Chapter numbers listed. You can read more about these and other bills at www.nysenate.gov.

My office sends regular emails sharing legislative and community updates, resources from government agencies and nonprofit organizations, and invitations to upcoming events. If you would like to be added to my email list, please send an email with the subject line "Join Liz List" to lkrueger@nysenate.gov.

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

2025-26 STATE BUDGET

While this year's budget was finalized more than a month late and was far from perfect, it began to chip away at the affordability crisis facing New Yorkers and included a number of important policy initiatives. The budget lowered taxes for the middle class, expanded the Child Tax Credit, paid off the State's unemployment insurance debt, provided universal free school meals, and increased access to reproductive healthcare. These improvements were achieved while keeping our fiscal house in order and funding the MTA Capital Plan in a more progressive way – lowering taxes on small businesses and the self-employed, while ensuring that those who can afford to are contributing their fair share to the transit system that powers the entire region.

Although the federal reconciliation bill that passed in July will result in billions of dollars of increased costs for NY State, the majority of those costs will not occur until the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year and beyond and, therefore, do not directly impact this year's budget. Highlights of this year's State Budget are outlined below.

- **Making Life More Affordable:** The budget provided financial relief to New Yorkers, including inflation rebate checks, decreasing middle-class tax rates to the lowest level in nearly 70 years, and cutting taxes for self-employed workers in the MTA region. It supported families through a three-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit, providing $1,000 annually for children under age four and increasing the credit for children ages four and older. Additionally, it provided relief from high utility costs, with $50 million for EmPower+ for home energy efficiency upgrades and $25 million in additional funding for the Home Energy Affordability Program.
- **High-Quality Education:** The budget invested in child care and afterschool, including $2.2 billion for Child Care Block Grant funding to provide affordable child care across NY State. It continued the Legislature's commitment to record funding for our schools, with over $26 billion in Foundation Aid and $340 million to provide free breakfast and lunch for all students statewide. The Legislature successfully fought to increase capital funding for SUNY and CUNY, and the budget established the NY Opportunity Promise Scholarship for New Yorkers ages 25–55 pursuing associate degrees in high-demand fields.
- **Affordable Housing:** The budget continued investments in stable, affordable housing, including $50 million annually for the Housing Access Voucher Program pilot, which will expand access to housing vouchers to New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, $40 million for the Homeowner Protection Program, and $20 million for eviction prevention legal services. The budget also provided over $1 billion for City of Yes initiatives in NYC, including $500 million for new affordable housing construction, $225 million for NYCHA, and $140 million for Mitchell-Lama preservation.
- **Healthcare & Mental Health:** The budget expanded access to care and strengthened mental health services statewide, including $40 million for Federally Qualified Health Centers, $500 million for distressed hospitals, and an additional $20.5 million for 200 inpatient mental health beds. By including $70 million for reproductive health initiatives, including $25 million for medication abortion grant funding and $4 million for abortion care training, as well as requiring hospitals to provide emergency abortion care, the budget strengthened New Yorkers' access to reproductive care.
- **Public Safety & Justice:** The budget protected communities, strengthened victims' services, and invested in smart public safety solutions, including establishing the Office of Gun Violence Prevention. It enhanced protections for sexual assault and domestic violence victims by facilitating survivor access to public assistance and strengthening workplace policies related to gender-based violence. The budget also revised the State's discovery laws to reduce case dismissals over minor oversights and allocated an additional $135 million for discovery reform implementation.
- **Consumer Protection:** The budget strengthened safeguards against deceptive practices and protected New Yorkers' money by regulating "Buy Now, Pay Later" loans, expanding standardized retail return policies to include online retailers, enhancing transparency for subscriptions with mandatory multiple cancellation options, and requiring disclosure for dynamic pricing algorithms.
- **Supporting Businesses & Workers:** The budget allocated $8 billion to pay off the State's unemployment insurance debt to the federal government, providing substantial tax relief to businesses. Paying off the debt enables the maximum weekly unemployment benefit to be raised from $504 to $869 per week in October 2025, and then to 50% of the State average weekly wage in October 2026.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** The budget advanced environmental protections, climate resiliency, and green energy, allocating $1 billion over five years for the Sustainable Futures Fund. The Fund will support: $450 million to reduce building emissions; $50 million for Clean Green Schools; $250 million for zero-emission transportation, including $100 million for electric school buses; and $200 million for renewable energy projects. The budget also included $500 million for clean water grants and $425 million for the Environmental Protection Fund.
- **Transportation & Infrastructure:** The budget moved forward with modernizing transit, strengthening road safety, and building infrastructure for the future. It fully funded the MTA's 2025-29 Capital Plan with $3 billion in direct State financing and reduced the MTA's borrowing costs.

State Senator Liz Krueger Albany Update | September 2025

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2025 NY STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Legislature passed a number of important bills expanding the rights of consumers, including:

- **Fostering Affordability and Integrity Through Reasonable Practices Act:** S.8416 expands the NY State Attorney General's ability to protect New Yorkers from unfair, deceptive, and abusive business practices.
- **Pricing Transparency for Online Grocery Services:** S.4433A requires food retailers and third-party platforms to clearly disclose whether the online price of products is the same, higher, or lower than the in-store price.
- **Consumer Litigation Funding Act:** S.1104A regulates consumer litigation funding transactions by subjecting them to oversight by the Department of State and establishing rules on disclosure, ethics, contracts, reporting, and interest rate caps.
- **Protecting New Yorkers From False Advertising:** S.1314 prohibits companies from falsely claiming in any correspondence that they are affiliated with, or have received approval from, a government agency and establishes penalties for violations.

The Senate passed many additional bills protecting consumers that unfortunately did not pass the Assembly, including legislation requiring **Mobile Apps Offering Subscription Services to Provide an Option to Cancel in the App** (S.4391), the **Licensing of Consumer Debt Collectors** (S.4271), the **NY Junk Fee Prevention Act** (S.363A), and my **NY Gift Certificate Scam Prevention Act** (S.704A).

ELECTION REFORM

The Legislature built on the voting reforms enacted in recent years by passing additional bills to increase voter participation and improve the administration of elections, including:

- **Increasing Reliability of Voter Rolls:** S.1356A requires the State Board of Elections to join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) – the nonprofit multi-state voter list maintenance organization – before July 31, 2026, to improve the accuracy of voter rolls and increase the reliability of our elections.
- **Allowing for Split Shifts for Poll Workers:** S.1842 implements split shifts for poll workers so individuals can engage in election work without needing to commit to working 16+ hours on Election Day.
- **Mandating Disclaimers on Political Websites:** S.1030 requires all public-facing websites paid for, hosted, and/or operated by political committees to include a disclaimer identifying the political committee responsible for the website.

The Senate passed several election reform bills I sponsored that did not pass in the Assembly, including bills to **Professionalize the NYC Board of Elections** (S.699), **Require Social Media Influencers to Disclose if a Campaign is Paying Them** (S.2437A), and **Prohibit the Use of Schools as Early Polling Sites** (S.654).

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Unfortunately, only a small number of bills aimed at improving the health and safety of our environment passed both houses of the Legislature this year, including:

- **Repealing the 100-Foot Rule:** S.8417, which I introduced, amends Public Service Law to repeal the so-called "100-Foot Rule" for residential buildings. The 100-Foot Rule forces all gas ratepayers to spend more than $200 million every year to subsidize the cost of connecting new customers to the system.
- **Public Renewables Transparency Act:** S.2462 requires a new public report three times a year, updating the progress of the NY Power Authority on the renewable energy generation strategic plan (required under the Build Public Renewables Act), including a public dashboard.
- **E-Mobility Battery Extended Producer Responsibility:** S.73A expands the existing Rechargeable Battery Law to include e-bike and e-scooter batteries, requiring manufacturers to implement collection programs and participation by retailers.

Many more important environmental bills passed the Senate, but were not acted upon by the Assembly this session, including my **Customer Savings and Reliability Act** (S.8421), the **Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act** (S.1464), **Prohibiting PFAS in Consumer Products** (S.187A), and my **Tropical Rainforest Economic & Environmental Sustainability Act** (S.7203).

GOVERNMENT REFORM

Several bills passed both houses to make State and local government more transparent and responsive, including:

- **Making the City Charter Referendum Process More Democratic:** S.590A, which I introduced, repeals the "bumping" provision in State law that enables the NYC mayor to use a mayoral charter revision commission to prevent all other referendum proposals initiated by New Yorkers or the City Council from appearing on the ballot.
- **Time Limits for FOIL Responses:** S.2520B establishes mandatory deadlines for State agencies to respond to requests for records under the Freedom of Information Law and requires written notifications about efforts being taken to make records available as quickly as possible.
- **Enhancing Public Participation in Agency Rulemaking:** Ch. 321/S.8402 extends requirements for State agencies to hold public hearings on proposed, new, or amended regulations.

Additional bills passed the Senate to improve government accountability that unfortunately did not pass the Assembly, including legislation to **Bar NDAs in Public Economic Development Contracts** (S.373), **Restore Power to the Public Authorities Control Board** (S.2459), and **Fully Decouple the State Tax Code From the Wasteful Federal Opportunity Zone Program** (S.3340).

HEALTH

The Legislature expanded access to healthcare while making it more affordable and equitable for all New Yorkers by passing several bills, including:

- **Health Data Privacy Act:** S.929, which I introduced, requires companies to obtain consent before tracking, storing, or selling sensitive health information. This will protect New Yorkers' health privacy from third-party purchasers and give users control over data related to diagnoses or inferred diagnoses.
- **Mandating Community Engagement for Hospital Closure:** S.1226 requires public notice and engagement whenever a hospital seeks to close entirely or close a unit that provides emergency, maternity, mental health, or substance use care.
- **Medical Aid in Dying:** S.138 allows adults to request and self-administer life-ending medication upon receiving medical approval. Individuals must make this decision voluntarily, be capable of making an informed decision, and have less than six months to live due to incurable and irreversible illness.

- **Prohibiting New For-Profit Hospices:** S.3437, which I introduced, bans the establishment of new for-profit hospices in NY State. Numerous investigations have documented that for-profit hospices are far more likely than nonprofit ones to provide low-quality care, employ less-skilled staff, improperly discharge patients, and engage in Medicare fraud.

Many more important healthcare bills passed the Senate, but were not acted upon by the Assembly. These include my legislation to **Require Certain Doctors Being Disciplined for Misconduct to Notify Patients of Their Status** (S.1476) and **Establish an Abortion Access Clinical Training Program** (S.1438A), and bills introduced by my colleagues to **Prohibit Pay for Delay Drug Agreements** (S.3203) and **Require Community Engagement Before Nursing Home Closures** (S.4275).

REPRODUCTIVE AND GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTHCARE

Building on the State's actions in past years to ensure access to reproductive and gender-affirming care, the Legislature passed a number of bills to reduce costs and protect against attacks by other states, including:

- **Reducing Costs for Unsuccessful IVF or IUI Procedures:** S.698, which I introduced, enables individuals to purchase insurance to cover the large out-of-pocket expenses of failed IVF or IUI procedures.
- **Provider Privacy on Medication Abortion Prescriptions:** Ch. 7/S.36A strengthens NY's Shield Law, adding protection for providers who prescribe abortion pills by allowing prescribers to request that their practice name, instead of their name, be on the prescription label.
- **Shielding Against Hostile States for Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Care:** S.4914B extends protections under NY law for individuals receiving or providing legally protected healthcare by restricting the enforcement of out-of-state legal actions, subpoenas, and investigations related to such care.

HOUSING

In addition to enacting the Housing Access Voucher Pilot Program as part of the State Budget, following years of advocacy by affordable housing and legal services organizations, the Legislature passed a number of housing bills, including:

- **Banning Algorithmic Rent Pricing:** S.7882 prohibits building owners from colluding by using algorithmic devices or services to set or adjust rents, lease renewal terms, or other terms and conditions.
- **Improving Security Deposit Protections:** S.952B requires building owners to return security deposits to rent-stabilized tenants within 14 days after a tenant vacates and provide an itemized list of any damages for which they are deducting funds.
- **Prohibiting Discriminatory Practices by Real Estate Appraisers:** S.7320 strengthens NY's Fair Housing protections by explicitly prohibiting biased valuations based on protected characteristics and expanding enforcement.

Many more important housing bills passed the Senate, but were not acted upon by the Assembly, including legislation to **Increase the Income Eligibility Threshold for the SCRIE & DRIE Rent Freeze Programs** (S.1457A), **Protect Ground Lease Residential Co-ops** (S.2433A), **Prevent Phony Building Demolition Applications** (S.2134A), and **Reduce Housing Construction Costs and Sprawl** (S.3492A).

PROMOTING YOUTH WELL-BEING & EDUCATION

The Legislature passed a number of important bills to improve the health and safety of young people, including:

- **Expanding Bullying and Harassment Protections:** S.4544B expands the Dignity for All Students Act to all students at private and religious schools to ensure all students can focus on learning in the classroom.
- **Freedom to Read Act:** S.1099 requires the State Education Department to implement policies to ensure that public school libraries are free to curate collections of books with the widest array of developmentally appropriate reading materials.
- **Ensuring the Civil Rights of University Students:** S.4559B requires every college and university in the State to appoint a Title VI Coordinator responsible for ensuring compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, handling complaints, and conducting outreach and training.

PUBLIC SAFETY & SUPPORTING CRIME VICTIMS

The Legislature passed several important bills to bolster public safety and support survivors of crimes, including:

- **Improving Discharge Planning:** S.1744A requires institutions to connect defendants found unfit to stand trial in misdemeanor cases due to severe mental illness to local services and resources prior to discharge.
- **Temporary Custody of Firearms by Law Enforcement:** S.1985A requires law enforcement officers responding to domestic violence incidents to take custody of all firearms in plain view and/or discovered through a lawful search for up to five days (or longer if an order of protection is pending).
- **Combating Coerced Consumer Debt:** S.1353B protects individuals from being held responsible for "coerced debt," which is debt incurred through abuse, fraud, threat, or manipulation and is particularly common among survivors of domestic abuse.
- **Grieving Families Act:** S.4423 enables surviving close family members of people who have died due to the negligence of another to seek compensation for noneconomic damages such as emotional losses.

TRANSPORTATION & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

The Senate passed several bills to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers that were unfortunately not acted upon by the Assembly, including:

- **Liability Insurance for E-Bike Deliveries:** S.1162, which I introduced, requires third-party food delivery services to carry no-fault insurance coverage that covers the injuries or deaths of pedestrians and bike delivery workers resulting from qualifying accidents.
- **Safety Requirements for Commercial E-Bike Operations:** S.106 establishes new rules for commercial e-bike operators and the businesses employing them. Businesses must provide safety training, ensure traffic law compliance, equip e-bikes with unique ID numbers, and supply safety gear.
- **MTA Rider Representation Act:** S.1148 increases the number of voting positions on the MTA Board from 17 to 21 and enhances representation of MTA riders with disabilities.

- **Noise Tax on Non-Essential Helicopters:** S.1104A imposes a noise tax on all non-essential helicopter and seaplane flights originating in NYC.

UTILITY REFORM & AFFORDABILITY

The Legislature passed several bills to address the affordability crisis by protecting utility ratepayers, increasing transparency, and reducing upward pressure on rates, including:

- **Creating a State Utility Consumer Advocate:** S.6277 creates the State Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate to represent the interests of residential utility customers before the Public Service Commission and any other relevant State and federal agencies, authorities, or courts.
- **Utility Capital Project Transparency Act:** S.8213 directs the Public Service Commission to require utilities to provide information related to proposed capital projects, including the overall price, location, and benefit to ratepayers, and shifts the burden of proof to the utilities to prove that any proposed rate increase is just and reasonable.
- **Restricting Estimated Billing:** S.2182A requires utilities to perform actual meter readings in most circumstances and directs the Public Service Commission to establish updated model procedures for estimated billing.
- **Restoring Consumer Representation on the Energy Planning Board:** S.2460 directs the Secretary of State to appoint a consumer representative to the State Energy Planning Board to ensure that consumer interests are included in the State Energy Plan.

Several additional important bills passed the Senate to protect ratepayers from skyrocketing utility costs that unfortunately did not move in the Assembly, including legislation to **Limit Utilities' Return on Equity** (S.1896), **Limit Fixed Charges** (S.1329), **Require the Return of Excess Revenue to Ratepayers** (S.7693), **Limit Executive Compensation from Ratepayers** (S.3734A), and **Regulate Retroactive Rate Hikes** (S.5593).

New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

PRSRT-STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK SENATE

State Senator Liz Krueger's

Albany Update | September 2025

Albany Office
416 State Capitol
Albany, NY 12247
(518) 455-2297

District Office
211 East 43rd Street
Suite 2000
New York, NY 10017
(212) 490-9535

Email: lkrueger@nysenate.gov
Website: krueger.nysenate.gov

– UPCOMING EVENTS –

VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS

Older Adult Roundtable Session 1: Federal Cuts to Adult Services: We Can Fight Back!
Thursday, September 11
2 pm – 3:30 pm

Medicare Parts A, B, C, and D: For Those New to Medicare or Considering Changes During Open Enrollment
Tuesday, October 7
2 pm – 3:30 pm

Older Adult Roundtable Session 2: The Impact of Federal Cuts to Medicare and Medicaid
Tuesday, October 14
2 pm – 3:30 pm

Older Adult Roundtable Session 3: The Impact of Federal Cuts to Social Security
Thursday, November 13
2 pm – 3:30 pm

Older Adult Roundtable Session 4: The Impact of Federal Cuts to Benefits and Older Adult American Act Funding
Tuesday, December 9
2 pm – 3:30 pm

IN-PERSON EVENT

Older Adult Resource Fair
Tuesday, October 28
11:30 am – 2:30 pm
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
331 East 70th Street
(between 1st and 2nd Avenues)

Additional details and RSVP forms for all upcoming events will be shared via my email updates.

You can also RSVP by emailing **lkrueger@nysenate.gov** or calling **(212) 490-9535**.

If you would like to receive regular email updates, please email **lkrueger@nysenate.gov** with "Join Liz List" in the subject line.