

Overview: 2018 State of the State, Excelsior Ever Upward

This afternoon, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo presented his 2018 State of the State in Albany. To support our Members in digesting the wide-ranging proposals and assess their impact on the field, we have compiled the following summary. We included page numbers in some areas where we know Members have a particular interest. If you would like more info about any of the proposals please reach out to any of the NYATEP staff directly for help. It is important to note that the Governor had proposed a combination of legislative changes (which will require the support of the Legislature) and budget proposals. In many instances the details we have are vague until the Executive Budget is released, which is expected prior to January 16th. [To read the full 2018 State of the State click here.](#)

FINALLY, we do not just have good news this year, we have great news. This is a good year for workforce development. The workforce field got a number of wins that we have been advocating for over the past five years – that will need our collective feedback and support over the next few months. NYATEP proactively worked behind the scenes throughout the spring and summer with key stakeholders and the Governor’s office to influence the workforce initiatives presented as part of the Governor’s State of the State proposals. This combined with the efforts of our countless members and partners out in the field every day, talking to their legislators about what works – is what made the difference this year.

After we celebrate, the real fight begins...

We are incredibly excited to see big numbers (\$175 million!) and big ideas (State Office of Workforce Development!) in this year’s State of the State – but we also know the devil is in the details. We will not know exactly where the resources are coming from and how they can be spent until we see the full Executive Budget. Our biggest goal is to ensure that the investments stay in the final budget AND are smart, reflective of best practices and do not duplicate services already on the ground.

Until the budget comes out you can read our formal position at www.nyatep.org

What are the major takeaways?

This year’s State of the State is titled *Excelsior Ever Upward*. The Governor’s plan contains 138 proposals (versus nearly 150 last year) across a wide range of issues including: the “Women’s Agenda”; Criminal Justice Reforms; Homelessness; Immigrant Protections; Veterans; Education; Higher Education; Tax Reform; Workforce Development; Economic Growth; Infrastructure; the Environment; Ethics; and Voting.

The biggest announcement impacting the workforce development field is the 19th proposal to “strengthen workforce development in New York State” (found on page 159). This is the largest proposed investment in workforce development in decades, and would nearly double the amount of available funding for workforce development in New York State. As we shared above, as of now we have some indications on where the resources are coming from, but will need to wait for the Executive Budget to see if this is ‘new’ money or repurposed money.

Proposal to “Strengthen Workforce Development in New York State”:

- **Establish New, \$175 million Consolidated Funding Application Through the REDCs:** The State will create a new Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) for workforce investments that “would support strategic regional efforts that meet businesses' short-term workforce needs, improve regional talent pipelines, expand apprenticeships, and address the long-term needs of expanding industries—with a particular focus on emerging fields with growing demand for jobs like clean energy, health technology, and computer science”. The funding for the workforce CFA will consist both of \$150 million in new, flexible resources and \$25 million in existing streams of workforce funding; and a subset of resources will be dedicated to support those with barriers to employment and young adults.
- **Create New Office of Workforce Development:** The State has heard our call for a better-integrated workforce system. This proposal seeks to “maximize our capacity to meet the state's workforce needs” by establishing the Office of Workforce Development which will serve as the focal point of accountability and coordination for all workforce training programs for the state, including the new CFA program. The State will hire a new Director of Workforce Development. The Office will establish standards for program performance and ensure alignment with the economic development goals of the state and the individual regions. The Director will serve on the State Workforce Investment Board, the Strategic Implementation Assessment Team (which reviews proposals submitted by the 10 Regional Economic Development Councils), and the Regional Community College Councils. Our internal sources believe this Office will be positioned with Empire State Development, and serve in a senior level capacity. This is an incredible idea -- which will only be effective if the right person gets the job and they have the authority to make actual change.
- **Launch One-Stop Shop for Workers and Businesses:** The State will create a new One-Stop Shop for all New York's Workforce that offers key information to workers and businesses through a straightforward and useful online portal. The One-Stop Shop will provide workers seeking jobs in New York State with a single, centralized resource to help them navigate the support programs that the State has to offer. It will also offer businesses a central point of access to the wide range of services the State provides to assist them in hiring employees.
- **Utilize State-of-the-Art Data Analytics to Plan and Map New York's Innovation Economy** This proposal highlights the challenge the system faces in uniformly mapping workforce needs of New York's economy effectively. The proposal seeks to expand Monroe Community College's innovative data mining methodology to identify local workforce needs to all regions in the State. The goal is to use data “to better target its workforce investments and better attract top talent and top companies to the communities that need them most”.

Additional Proposed Workforce Development Investments:

The following are proposed investments directly related to workforce development programming.

- **Youth Jobs Program (Tax Credit)** Proposed to increase the maximum credit available to certified New York employers by 50 percent—raising the maximum tax credit from \$5,000 to \$7,500 for certified youth employed full-time and from \$2,500 to \$3,750 for those employed part-time. “In addition, to help participants better-develop the skills needed to advance from an entry-level position toward a chosen career, the Governor will direct the Department of Labor to align and connect employers and youth participating in the Youth Jobs Program with regional workforce development efforts of SUNY, CUNY and New York’s BOCES. This alignment will leverage State workforce investments and augment skills development that employers are able to provide on-site with additional workforce support in the classroom and online.”
- **Cut Recruitment Pipeline of MS-13 on Long Island (\$11.5 million)** To help Suffolk County combat the recent growth of violence traced directly to the MS-13 gang, the Governor proposes to engage at-risk youth in social and educational programs. His five-point plan includes \$11.5 million dollars: expand empire state after school program (\$2 million); a special program within New York Youth Jobs Voucher Program (\$5 million); gang prevention education programming (\$1.5 million over three years); increase comprehensive support services for at-risk youth, especially immigrant children (\$3 million over three years); and deploy a community assistance team: composed of six state troopers, three investigators, one senior investigator and one supervisor. This plan will provide additional funding and responsibility for employment and training programs in the area to support youth and combat growing gang violence.
- **Off-shore Wind (\$15 million)** Governor Cuomo is calling for a procurement of at least 800 megawatts of offshore wind power between two solicitations to be issued in 2018 and 2019, resulting in enough clean, renewable energy to power 400,000 New York households. These solicitations will be the first in a set schedule to reach the 2030 target, will create competition among developers to build some of the largest offshore wind projects in the United States, and will ensure that the resulting jobs and economic development benefits accrue across the state. In addition, Governor Cuomo is directing NYSERDA to invest \$15 million in clean energy workforce development and infrastructure advancement to train workers for jobs in this good-paying industry, including offshore wind construction, installation, operation, maintenance, design and associated infrastructure. To attract private investment in port infrastructure and supply chain activities, Governor Cuomo is further directing NYSERDA to work with Empire State Development and other state agencies to determine the most promising public and private offshore wind port infrastructure investments.
- **One World Utica Welcome and Opportunity Center (No Funding Specified)** To continue to support the resettlement of refugees into the Utica community, Governor Cuomo will invest in the expansion into the formerly vacant Utica 86 School of Commerce building to establish a “One World Welcome and Opportunity Center” in the heart of downtown Utica. This Impact Center will not only allow the Center to expand their services to provide workforce and vocational training to the Mohawk Valley’s entire six-

county region, but will also create shared work space for partner organizations to create a “one-stop shop” for individuals to access services. This award will improve the delivery of services to refugees, enhance coordination between organizations and help refugees better integrate into the Mohawk Valley.

- **Child Care Availability Task Force (No Funding Specified)** To build on his investments in child care and the development of safe, accessible, and affordable child care, the Governor is establishing a new Child Care Availability Task Force. This task force, which will include representatives from the child care provider community, the advocacy community, representatives of the business community, unions that represent child care providers, representatives from several state agencies and local departments of social services. Child care is a primary challenge for working parents and caregivers.
- **Support Organized Labor (No Funding Specified)** By expanding the CUNY Murphy Institute for Worker Education into the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. Additionally the Governor aims to take steps to protect collective bargaining, the right to organize, and preserve workers’ rights. New York State has the highest percentage of union workers in the country.
- **Nonprofit Leaders (No Funding Specified)** Explore the feasibility of nonprofit organizations to access group insurance coverage through the NYSHIP Empire Plan to make nonprofit employment more appealing. Creation of the Nonprofit Educational Assistance Initiative to improve access to educational assistance and promote career advancement scholarships for nonprofit employee; and make business services available to nonprofits and develop strong pipelines to recruit recent graduates, retirees, immigrants and veterans to work in the human services sector. “Finally, in conjunction with SUNY and CUNY, New York State will host a human services workforce summit to highlight best practices in recruitment and retention and create a Nonprofit Workforce Development Steering Committee to work with the director of the new Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation to identify strategies to improve workforce development in the nonprofit sector.”
- **EMS Workforce (No Funding Specified)** The Strengthening of the Rural EMS System plan will ensure a trained, effective EMS workforce, and improve the timeliness, quality, and delivery of EMS throughout rural areas of New York State.

Education and Higher Education Proposed Investments:

- **Universal Pre-K (\$15 million)** Invest in pre-kindergarten by providing an additional funding to continue to expand pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds in high-need schools around the State.
- **Require Food Pantries at all SUNY and CUNY campuses (\$1 million) (Pg. 117)** To support the establishment of a food pantry or increase accessibility to food for poor students.

- **Continue the New York State Mentoring Program (No Funding Specified) (Pg. 122)** This program reportedly serves about 2,000 students in school-based programs in 96 schools in New York.
- **Empire State After-School Program (\$10 million)** To support the creation of 6,250 new slots in communities with high rates of student homelessness, or designated as in need of a safe place for students to go after the school day ends.
- **Early College High School Program Expansion (\$9 million)** To support the creation of at least 15 Early College High Schools, where schools will partner with a college or university and industry partner to create opportunities for every student in the school to graduate with some college credit.
- **Computer Science Education to All Elementary, Middle, and High School (\$6 million)** To provide teacher support and development in computer science and engineering. In addition, the Governor will call on the State Education Department to work with industry leaders to develop model computer science standards.
- **Excelsior Free Tuition Program (\$118 million)** To support 27,000 students in the Excelsior Scholarship program.

Economic Development Proposed Investments:

The Governor also proposed a wide range of infrastructure and economic development initiatives that may have an impact on workforce development, from increased number of job openings through direct expansion in key sectors of the State, including agriculture, technology, and tourism.

- **Regional Economic Development Councils (\$750 million)** The Governor is proposing an 8th round of the REDCs and to expand the **Downtown Revitalization Initiative (\$100 million)** to provide up to \$10 million for awards in each region. Together, these investments will ensure that communities have the tools they need to boost their local economies and transform downtown neighborhoods.
- **Industrial Hemp Expansion (\$2 million)** Expand capacity for the emerging agricultural hemp industry that is grown and processed in the Southern Tier.
- **Photonics Attraction Fund (\$30 million)** New York State will dedicate a \$30 million Photonics Attraction Fund through the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council specifically to attract integrated photonics companies to set up their manufacturing operations in the greater Rochester area.
- **Launch New NY Broadband Program Round III Awards to Achieve Governor Cuomo’s Goal of “Broadband for All” (No Funding Specified)** This will allow for 99% of New York to receive high speed broadband access. The Governor suggests this initiative will “leverage” \$225 million in State funding.

- **Autonomous Vehicle Legislation (No Funding Specified)** “To ensure New York State remains a home for emerging technology and becomes a destination for autonomous vehicles, Governor Cuomo will champion legislation that will extend the current program and modify the statutory construct to further encourage testing within the state and prepare New York for the future integration of this technology into everyday life.”
- **Invest in New Mass Transit, New Roads and Bridges (\$11.7 Billion)** In 2018, New York State will continue its landmark infrastructure program by investing \$11.7 billion to transform the state’s transportation infrastructure. The State Department of Transportation will pave 2,000 miles of road and repair or rehabilitate 500 bridges, and the New York State Thruway Authority will renew an additional 170 lane miles, repair or rehabilitate 25 bridges and complete the new Governor Mario M. Cuomo bridge in 2018.
- **Construct an Inland Port in Central New York to Improve Regional Trade (No Funding Specified)** Building on Governor Cuomo’s historic investments in modernizing our infrastructure, New York will construct an inland port in the Town of DeWitt (near Syracuse) that will facilitate the movement of containerized freight by rail as opposed to truck.
- **Drone Economy (No Funding Specified)** By investing in drone companies that are at the forefront of this innovative industry and providing trainings to equip New Yorkers with the tools to use this exciting technology, Governor Cuomo expects to lay the groundwork for future job creation and establish New York as the drone capital of the nation.

Additional reforms to keep an eye on:

- **Re-entry Proposals (Pg. 64) for Formerly & Currently Incarcerated New Yorkers (No Funding Specified)**
 - Advance legislation to remove mandatory suspensions of driver’s licenses for people convicted of drug crimes, which keeps people from going to work and attending drug treatment, as long as the crimes did not involve driving.
 - Proposal to remove statutory bans on occupational licensing for professions outside of law enforcement and instead require agencies to assess applicants on an individualized basis.
 - Expand opportunities for release from prison through geriatric release consideration for people over the age of 55 with debilitating conditions exacerbated by age, by expanding the type and variety of programming that will make people eligible for merit release and limited credit time allowances, and studying whether people eligible for limited credit time allowances can safely take part in educational and work release.
 - Reduce financial burdens of individuals after their release to accelerate their return to productivity, including removing the parole supervision fee, and having local child support enforcement offices review child support orders of people incarcerated for over six months, and, if warranted, adjust the

orders downward so that unpayable child support debt does not accumulate during a person's incarceration. Without this crushing weight of debt, a parent emerges from prison ready to start working, and to start supporting his or her child upon release.

- **Raise the Age (\$100 million)** To support a continuum of effective prevention, diversion, treatment, re-entry and supervision services at the state and local level.
- **Dream Act (No Funding Specified)** The DREAM Act will give undocumented student's access to the Tuition Assistance Program, as well as state-administered scholarships and loans.
- **Exploration of the elimination of the minimum wage tip credit (No Funding Specified)** The New York State Department of Labor will hold public hearings to solicit input from workers, businesses and others. Those who wish to testify will be able to pre-register on the Department's website. The Department will issue a notice identifying the specific times and locations for the hearings.
- **First 1,000 Days Proposal (No Funding Specified)** To explore the range of services from mental health, drug treatment, pre-natal care, Medicaid access, and parental support for low income families.
- **Reverse the Opioid Epidemic (No Funding Specified)** A comprehensive plan to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for perpetuating the epidemic; strengthen protections against addiction stemming from prescription opioids; take steps to eliminate insurance barriers to addiction treatment and recovery services; direct state agencies to implement regulatory and policy reforms that increase access to substance use disorder services; and advance legislation to add 11 fentanyl analogs to Schedule I of the controlled substance schedules of New York State Public Health Law.
- **Combating Homelessness (No Funding Specified)** Governor Cuomo will require that local governments must have an effective outreach program to the street homeless as a condition of receiving State funding for homelessness services. Governor Cuomo will direct the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance to require social services districts to engage in planning activities related to street outreach, homelessness prevention activities, rapid rehousing, and ongoing housing stability for the formerly homeless. The State will require the social services districts to engage with ongoing efforts, set reasonable goals that are data-driven and uniquely tailored to the needs of its communities, and to report regularly on progress made.

What will take up all of the news coverage?

All of the initiatives slated above, are notable, and in many ways cut to the core of workforce and economic development. However, the issues below will likely dominate the nightly news coverage this Legislative season...

Taxes, taxes, taxes: The Governor spent much of the State of the State sharing his dismay for the President of the United States, and specifically with the recent passage of the federal tax bill. The Governor's office is working on a number of proposals to override or dismantle the tax structure in New York. Additionally the Governor will continue to pressure local governments to take steps to reduce local property taxes through consolidation.

Workplace sexual harassment: Sadly, Albany is no stranger to scandals, and the Governor made a strong statement towards putting measure in place to protect victims of workplace sexual harassment and assault. Specifically he is looking to prevent taxpayer dollars to fund individual sexual harassment settlements, prohibit confidentiality agreements relating to sexual assault/harassment for all branches of government and void forced arbitration policies that prevent sexual harassment cases from consideration in law enforcement investigation and trials.

Election/voting registration: An important election year is upon us, and the Governor wants to make it easier to vote in New York State by instituting same day and automatic voter registration, early voting, enacting a number of security safeguards.

What you can do NOW?

We have a win, now we need to advocate.

Spread the message: Our collective message needs to reflect that we are in the business of creating a skilled workforce and getting ALL New Yorkers connected to employment, which leads to jobs, stability, and growth for New York State. Workforce development is an economic development catalyst, and flexible resources are necessary to invest in high quality education, training and employment efforts customized to the diverse needs of jobseekers and businesses. The Governor's proposal is a good first step to getting a fully funded workforce system in New York.

Keep engaging your statewide legislators, local Chief Elected officials & business supporters. We all need to see ourselves as workforce advocates, and use our relationships with local elected officials to ensure our experience and expertise is represented in discussions related to the implementation of the Governor's agenda. This is not a done deal, and if we are not out there talking about what we do and why it is important, no one will. We need to ensure that duplication of current efforts on the ground are limited, and funds remain dedicated to practices we know work.