



## *In The News-New York State*



### Governor Hochul Convenes Cabinet Meeting on Impacts of Federal “Big Ugly Bill”

Governor Kathy Hochul this week directed State agencies to prepare “comprehensive strategies” to help limit the long-term impact on programs facing federal cuts, calling for initial cuts of \$750 million from the \$254 billion budget adopted in May.

The Governor asserted that federal actions could have a \$13 billion impact New York’s health care system including health insurance coverage, hospital services, and nutrition assistance.

**Essential Plan/Medicaid:** Governor Hochul detailed that Essential Plan and Medicaid program changes could impact more than 2 million New Yorkers. This includes approximately 730,000 lawfully-present non-citizens who could lose Essential Plan coverage due to a \$7.5 billion funding reduction and 1.3 million New Yorkers that will have new eligibility and verification requirements which could impact Medicaid coverage.



In addition, [Analysis from the Greater New York Hospital Association \(GNYHA\) and the Healthcare Association of New York State \(HANYS\)](#) estimates a total \$8 billion in annual cuts to New York’s hospitals.

**SNAP and Nutrition Assistance:** Under the federal bill, New York State will be required to fund 15 percent of all SNAP benefits starting as early as October 1, 2027, at an estimated cost to the State of \$1.2 billion per year. The law further cuts the federal share of SNAP administrative costs from 50 percent to 25 percent which will increase costs for the State by roughly \$36 million annually and increase costs for counties and New York City by roughly \$168 million annually. Governor Hochul said counties will have to begin incorporating this reduction in their 2026 budgets due this fall.

According to the Governor, New York State is also facing more than \$900 million in lost SNAP benefits for New Yorkers, due to “new, more punitive program requirements,” including “unnecessarily administratively complex work requirements” and restrictive eligibility for legally present noncitizens.

The Independent Citizens Budget Commission, also on Thursday, released a budget briefing, [Smart Choices Better Futures](#), criticizing State and City leaders for enacting “budgets are unaffordable and unprepared both for a recession and for federal budget cuts that will start hitting this fiscal year and grow in the future.” The CBC asserted that state and city spending increased 3 to 4 times the inflation rate without putting aside funding for expected federal cuts.

According to published reports, the CBC issued a similar warning earlier this year, before the respective budgets were adopted, however, lawmakers did not want to make preemptive cuts because could not fully anticipate the extent of the federal cuts.

At Thursday's cabinet meeting, Governor Hochul explained her approach to impending federal cuts.

"During our Budget process, we had some instinct that this would happen, something would happen," she explained. "That's why we stopped \$400 billion in spending... That's why our one-time \$3 billion inflation rebate is now a \$2 billion inflation rebate."



## **Commission Halts Construction of Transmission Lines as Federal Offshore Wind Permitting Stalls**

Citing consumer protection, the NYS Public Service Commission is halting the approval process for construction of new transmission lines to bring offshore wind power into the New York City downstate region due to the federal government's halt on wind projects.

In light of significant federal uncertainty, the New York State Public Service Commission took "decisive action" to protect New York State ratepayers by "recalibrating the timeline" for offshore wind transmission development, the Commission announced in a press release.

With the federal government halting new offshore wind permitting, the Commission is "strategically terminating" the ongoing Public Policy Transmission Need (PPTN) process, ensuring New Yorkers are not "burdened with premature infrastructure costs while preserving the flexibility to act quickly as soon as federal conditions allow."

"One of our most important tasks is to protect consumers," said Commission Chair Rory M. Christian. "Given the uncertainty coming out of Washington regarding offshore wind, we must act to protect consumers by withdrawing our PPTN determination; but this is far from the end of the story. We will continue to press forward regarding infrastructure needs for offshore wind in the future once the federal government resumes leasing and permitting for wind energy generation projects."

According to the Commission, the decision does not affect previously permitted offshore wind generation projects in New York. The State already has one offshore wind farm in operation, South Fork, which is capable of producing 132 megawatts of electricity, roughly enough for 70,000 homes. On May 19, Governor Hochul announced that Empire Wind, which is building an 816-megawatt offshore wind array, would resume construction, creating thousands of jobs and the ability to power 500,000 homes with clean energy. Equinor — the project's developer — has resumed construction of this fully-permitted project that had already received the necessary federal approvals. Additionally, New York has a third project under construction by Ørsted, the Sunrise Wind project, that is planned to deliver 924 megawatts of electricity into Long Island - enough to power approximately 600,000 homes.

# *In The News-New York City*



## **Governor Hochul and NYC Public Schools Chancellor Aviles-Ramos Highlight Smartphone Restrictions in NYC**

Governor Kathy Hochul and New York City Public Schools Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos this week highlighted plans for implementing smartphone restrictions across NYC Public Schools – the nation’s largest school system – when students return this fall. The Chancellor’s proposed regulations for NYC Public Schools will be voted on by the NYC Panel for Education Policy (PEP) on July 23.

Speaking at a roundtable at Walton High School that included representatives of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), school safety officials, students and other key stakeholders throughout the NYC Public Schools system, Governor Hochul and Chancellor Aviles-Ramos discussed the NYC Public Schools plan. It follows the State’s new Distraction-Free Schools law which requires bell-to-bell smartphone restrictions in K-12 school districts statewide, starting this fall for the 2025-2026 school year.

As part of that law, public school districts statewide must finalize and publish their distraction-free policy by August 1. In addition to NYC Public Schools, many other districts across the state have already developed or finalized their policy.

“Our school leaders know firsthand how excessive cell phone use can disrupt learning and impact student well-being,” Council of School Supervisors and Administrators President Henry D. Rubio said. “Governor Hochul’s commitment to a distraction-free school day is a powerful step forward, and we’re grateful that she and Chancellor Aviles-Ramos are engaging all stakeholders in shaping how this policy will be implemented. We know the success of this initiative will depend on thoughtful planning, consistent protocols, and the resources needed to support our schools, especially larger campuses with more complex needs. If we get the rollout right, balancing the need for focus during the day with peace of mind after school and in emergencies, then we have the opportunity to create a safer and more connected school experience for every student.”

This new requirement will take place in the 2025-26 School Year and applies to all schools in public school districts, as well as charter schools and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Governor Hochul’s cellphone policy creates a statewide standard for distraction-free schools in New York including:

- Prohibits unsanctioned use of smartphones and other internet-enabled personal devices on school grounds in K-12 schools for the entire school day (from “bell to bell”), including classroom time and other settings like lunch and study hall periods.
- Allows schools to develop their own plans for storing smartphones during the day — giving administrators and teachers the flexibility to do what works best for their buildings and students.

- Secures \$13.5 million in funding to be made available for schools that need assistance in purchasing storage solutions to help them go distraction-free.
- Requires schools to give parents a way to contact their kids during the day when necessary.
- Requires teachers, parents and students to be consulted in developing the local policy.
- Prevents inequitable discipline.

The Distraction-Free Schools law clarifies that students will have authorized access to simple cellphones without internet capability, as well as internet-enabled devices officially provided by their school for classroom instruction, such as laptops or tablets used as part of lesson plans.

Additionally, the law includes several exemptions to smartphone restrictions, including for students who require access to an internet-enabled device to manage a medical condition, where required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), for academic purposes, or for other legitimate purposes, such as translation, family caregiving and emergencies.



## **MTA on Track for Record Year of Ridership and Performance in 2025**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is on track to deliver a record-breaking year, following the success of the first six months of 2025, according to an announcement by Governor Kathy Hochul.

New York City Transit (NYCT), Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and Metro-North Railroad ridership and on-time performance have all improved in the first half of the year, while customer satisfaction rates are up across all agencies. This comes while the MTA executes its 2025-2029 capital plan, investing in repair work that will ensure the system continues to run reliably. According to the Governor, safety in the subway system continues to improve with overall major crimes dropping by 3.2 percent from the same period last year and by almost 10 percent when compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

### **New York City Transit**

Weekday subway on-time performance in the first six months of 2025 was 83.7 percent, 2.4 percentage points higher than the same time last year and on track for the best non-pandemic year in history. Weekday subway delays are down 11 percent in 2025 compared to 2024, while weekend delays were down 14 percent. Bus service delivery was above 95 percent each month of 2025, and bus speeds have improved over the first half of the year, thanks in part to reduced gridlock following the start of congestion pricing.

Ridership has also increased in 2025. The first half of the year has seen record post-pandemic ridership for subways, buses and paratransit. In June, NYCT surpassed 106 million rides, up 10 percent from 2024. 2025 subway ridership is up 8 percent compared to 2024 and 31 percent compared to 2022. Bus ridership has also grown in 2025, with ridership up 12 percent compared to 2024.



## Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad

In June, LIRR hit a new post-pandemic high for weekday riders by averaging 266,047 weekday riders. On June 18, LIRR set a new single day post-pandemic ridership record, carrying 287,437 customers. LIRR carried 6.9 million customers in June, representing 89 percent of pre-pandemic ridership. Year-to-date ridership on LIRR is up 9 percent compared to 2024 and up 64 percent from 2022. LIRR also achieved the best June non-pandemic On-Time Performance in its history at 95.9 percent, up 1.4 percentage points from 2024.

On June 18, Metro-North carried nearly 259,000 riders and average weekday ridership for the month of June was 235,450, both new post-pandemic highs. Year-to-date Metro-North ridership is up 6 percent compared to 2024 and up 63 percent compared to 2022. Metro-North delivered an On-Time Performance rate of 98 percent in June, continuing its outstanding start to 2025. In the customer survey completed this spring, Metro-North received a satisfaction rating of 89 percent from customers, an increase of 4 percent from the Fall 2024 survey, while satisfaction among LIRR customers surged 11 percentage points from this time last year.



## Bills Passed by the City Council

***Introduction 423-A, sponsored by Council Member Carlina Rivera*** -- Establishes procedures for the Department of Correction (DOC), Correctional Health Services (CHS), and the Board of Correction (BOC) to follow after an individual dies in DOC custody. DOC would be required to notify the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the deceased's defense attorney, BOC, and the public and provide all relevant records to BOC for investigation. DOC, CHS, and BOC would be required to investigate every death and issue reports.

***Introduction 607-A, sponsored by Council Member Shekar Krishnan*** -- Requires HPD to relocate tenants who lost their homes due to a fire or other emergency in the same or an immediately adjacent community district upon request.

***Introduction 737-A, sponsored by Council Member Shaun Abreu*** -- Requires third-party food and grocery delivery services to offer a tipping option of at least 10 percent of the purchase price on each food or grocery delivery order.

***Introduction 738-A, sponsored by Council Member Shaun Abreu*** -- Requires third-party food and grocery delivery services to provide the option to tip before or at the same time an order is placed.

***Introduction 749-A, sponsored by Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez*** -- Requires the Mayor to designate an agency or office to provide centralized support to residents displaced by a fire, natural disaster, or other emergency impacting a residential building.

***Introduction 750-A, sponsored by Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez*** -- Requires DOB to publish a report on how long it takes to correct violations in certain residential buildings, measuring the number of days between when DOB issued a notice of violation to when DOB accepted the correction.

***Introduction 844-A, sponsored by Council Member Kevin Riley*** – Expands the scope of the NYCHA commercial space feasibility study required by Introduction 810-A by adding examination of potential grant funding up to \$10,000 per business to help NYCHA residents establish, expand, or grow their businesses.

***Introduction 859-A, sponsored by Council Member Shaun Abreu*** -- Requires delivery services to pay their contracted delivery workers no later than 7 calendar days after the end of a pay period.

***Introduction 1020-A, sponsored by Council Member Gale Brewer*** -- Requires DOI to report: the subject matter of any investigation, review, study, or audit relating to the New York City Police Department (NYPD) that has been open for more than three years; the number of incidents when the NYPD restricted or significantly delayed access to any information that the Inspector General for the NYPD required or interfered with the Inspector General's duties in closed investigations and investigations that have been open for more than three years; and the number and subject matters of investigations, reviews, studies, and audits relating to the NYPD that were closed without issuing a report during the preceding calendar year.

***Introduction 1077-A, sponsored by Council Member Rita Joseph*** -- Requires the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to provide luggage to youth entering the foster care system, transitioning between foster homes, or exiting the foster care system.

***Introduction 1133-A, sponsored by Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez*** -- Extends food delivery worker protections to all contracted delivery workers retained to deliver goods for a delivery service.

***Introduction 1135-A, sponsored by Council Member Sandy Nurse*** -- Requires third-party grocery delivery services to pay their delivery workers a minimum pay rate that would meet or exceed that set by DCWP.

***Introduction 1246-A, sponsored by Speaker Adrienne Adams*** -- Codifies the Fair Futures Program, in which ACS partners with non-profit organizations to provide coaching and tutoring in a range of academic, career development, housing, and independent living programs for young people in or who have exited foster care.

***Introduction 1257-A, sponsored by Council Member Crystal Hudson*** -- Requires the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to identify the 10 most common neurological conditions and the 10 most common mental health conditions affecting older adults and to report this information to the Commissioner of the Department for the Aging (DFTA).

***Introduction 1259-A, sponsored by Council Member Linda Lee*** -- Requires that all direct service staff employed at juvenile detention facilities who are not professionally certified or licensed in mental health, behavioral analysis, medicine, or a similar field, to complete foundational training in behavioral support strategies, include de-escalation and crisis prevention techniques.



## **City of New York Signs Declaration Challenging Federal Government's Termination of \$351 Million in Emergency Preparedness Grants**

The City of New York this week submitted a [legal declaration in support of a challenge by the Office of New York Attorney General Letitia James](#) challenging the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) termination of more than \$351 million in Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program funding to protect against natural disasters.

“As we saw just earlier this week, flooding and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, and it will take investments from all levels of government, including our federal partners, to keep New Yorkers safe and prepared against these types of emergencies,” said Mayor Adams. “The 19 projects that rely on BRIC funding will protect jobs, neighborhoods, and housing across New York City and we urge the federal government to continue to help protect the nation’s largest city and economic engine against future emergencies, just like it has since the president’s first term. We’re proud to submit this declaration as we fight to ensure New Yorkers receive every dollar they’re entitled to, especially those dollars that keep us safe.”

BRIC funding — appropriated to New York City by Congress — was established during the first Trump administration with bipartisan support to aid with emergency preparedness.

## *Briefs*

### **Comptroller DiNapoli: State Tax Receipts Higher Than Projections in First Quarter**

State tax receipts totaled \$33.2 billion through the first quarter of State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26, \$580.5 million higher than the most recent Division of the Budget (DOB) estimates. State tax collections were also \$3.3 billion higher than the first quarter of 2024, according to the monthly [State Cash Report](#) released by New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli.

“Higher tax collections for the state primarily reflect strong personal income tax collections on 2024 income,” Comptroller DiNapoli said.

Personal income tax (PIT) receipts totaled \$19.2 billion and were \$66.3 million above DOB’s financial plan projections through the first quarter. However, PIT receipts were nearly \$3 billion higher than the same period in SFY 2024-25, reflecting, in part, the 24.9% increase in collections from the settlement of the 2024 tax year, the Comptroller explained.

Year-to-date consumption and use tax collections totaled \$5.8 billion which was 3.3% or \$182.5 million higher than the same period last year, and \$2.5 million higher than anticipated by DOB. Sales tax receipts, the largest share of these taxes, increased by \$34.1 million, or 1.7% in the month of June. Business taxes, which included collections from the Pass-through Entity Tax, totaled \$7.5 billion, \$176 million higher than through June in the prior fiscal year, and \$558.2 million higher than DOB’s financial plan projections.

All Funds spending through June totaled \$60.9 billion, which was \$5.9 billion, or 10.8%, higher than last year for the same period, primarily due to higher Medicaid costs. All Funds spending through June was \$1.7 billion lower than DOB projected, primarily due to lower spending on local assistance grants. State Operating Funds spending totaled \$33.9 billion, \$3.2 billion, or 10.3% higher than last year and \$1.4 billion lower than DOB projected.

The State’s General Fund ended June with a balance of \$53.6 billion, \$2.7 billion higher than DOB projected and \$4 billion higher than last year, primarily due to higher than anticipated tax collections and lower than anticipated spending.

## Attorney General James Defends Immigration Services for Unaccompanied Children

New York Attorney General Letitia James on Thursday joined a coalition of 19 other states in defending legal services for unaccompanied immigrant children.

In an amicus brief filed with the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Attorney General James and the coalition argue that federal law requires the federal government to ensure legal representation for these children to the greatest extent practicable, and that cutting these services will endanger vulnerable children who depend on immigration lawyers to access housing, health care, education, and more.

“Abandoning support for children who have come to America fleeing violence and abuse is unbelievably cruel,” said Attorney General James. “Everyone – no matter who they are – deserves legal help, especially children without a parent or guardian to rely on. Immigration lawyers can help children get the health care, housing, and education they need, and I will keep fighting to ensure no child is left to fend for themselves.”

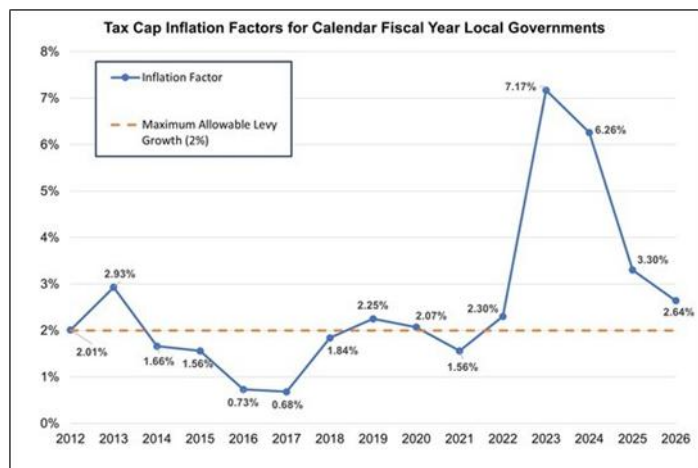
In 2024, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the Unaccompanied Children Program Foundational Rule, which requires the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to fund legal service organizations that provide direct immigration legal representation for certain unaccompanied children.

## Comptroller DiNapoli: Property Tax Cap Remains at 2% for 2026

The 2026 property tax levy growth will be capped at 2% for local governments that operate on a calendar-based fiscal year, according to [data released this week](#) by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. This figure affects tax cap calculations for all counties, towns, and fire districts, as well as 44 cities and 13 villages.

"Allowable tax levy growth will be limited to 2% for a fifth consecutive year," Comptroller DiNapoli said. "The challenge for local governments will be maintaining essential local services within this cap, while still dealing with higher prices for commodities and services and the potential impact of policy choices at the federal level."

In accordance with state law, Comptroller DiNapoli's office calculated the 2026 inflation factor at 2.64% for those local governments with a calendar fiscal year, above the 2% allowable levy increase.





The tax cap, which first applied to local governments (excluding New York City) and school districts in 2012, limits annual tax levy increases to the lesser of the rate of inflation or 2% with certain exceptions. The law also includes a provision that allows municipalities to override the cap.

## **Mayor Adams Appoints Aissata M.B. Camara as Commissioner of NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs**

New York City Mayor Eric Adams this week announced the appointment of Aissata M.B. Camara as the next Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for International Affairs.

Camara previously served as deputy commissioner for policy and strategic initiatives and chief of staff for (OIA). Camara holds a Bachelor of Arts in international affairs and social policy from Baruch College and a Master of Public Administration in international public and nonprofit management and policy from New York University Wagner Graduate School of Public Service.

"On behalf of the secretary-general and myself, I want to congratulate our long-time partner Aissata M.B. Camara on becoming the new New York City Commissioner for International Affairs," said Amina J. Mohammed, deputy secretary-general, U.N. "We very much look forward to working with Aissata in her new role and strengthening the bonds between the United Nations and its host city, our home for close to 80 years. The United Nations is a global institution, but it is also an integral part of the fabric of New York City."

## ***Coming Up***

### ***New York State***

***Wednesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>***

***State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) Meeting, Albany, 1 p.m.***

***Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>***

***New York State Medicaid Evidence Based Benefit Review Advisory Committee,  
Empire State Plaza – Concourse Meeting Room #6, Albany, 10:30 a.m.***

***Workers' Compensation Board Webinar:***

***Protecting Yourself and Your Team: Coverage Essentials for Businesses, 12 p.m.***

***Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup>***

***Cannabis Control Board Meeting, Location and Time are To Be Announced***

### ***New York City***

***\*There are currently no meetings on the City Level at the time of publication\****

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