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### 30th Peoples State of the State

### The New Hope Budget

### New Politics, New Action, New Budget

**(Albany, NY)** Today’s **Peoples State of the State** address marks the 30th year that advocates from across New York State joined together for what has become the long standing “unofficial” kickoff of the legislative session in Albany. However, this year brings a whole new balance of power to our state government in Albany. Exciting, bold and progressive policies are now possible, and we look forward to the opportunity in 2019 to forge a new and better way forward for **all New Yorkers**.

Together, the advocates called on state government leaders to make New York a truly progressive leader and reject the punitive policies of the President. Speakers addressed issues including fighting poverty and economic inequality, tax fairness, spending for human service programs, food insecurity, health care, public and higher education, affordable housing and tenants’ rights, public financing of elections, voting rights, workers’ rights, racial justice and more. The group stressed the need to invest in a bottom up growth strategy that will **benefit all New Yorkers**, including those who have been left behind in this economic recovery.

“In New York, we have some of the worst income inequality in the country. People who are poor and in the middle class have seen little marked increase in wages while incomes have exploded at the very top. Moreover, people have to spend an increasingly high percentage of their income on health care, child care and housing. We have had enough. It’s time for our state government to lift the 2% spending cap and step up to expand affordable healthcare, appreciably increase the stock of affordable housing and vastly expand the availability of affordable childcare. We can pay for these things by asking the very richest New Yorkers to pay a bit more, keep the stock transfer tax and collect a purchase fee for absentee owners of multi-million-dollar properties. The New Hope, New York Budget Principles need to be a guide to our lawmakers as they shape a truly moral budget,” stated **Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches.**

“It is a well-constructed myth that investing in corporations and Wall Street will help grow our economy,” said **Rashida Tyler, a State Board Member of Citizen Action's Hudson Valley Chapter.** "This is simply not true. We the People grow the economy through our hard-work, determination and unwillingness to quit. There are enough resources in this great state of ours to ensure that all New Yorkers can have access to quality healthcare, education, and jobs that pay a living wage. This year's budget should reflect the society we want to live in, where we can all fully participate and thrive. The Economist Amartya Sen was correct when he said, ‘economic growth without investment in human development is unsustainable and unethical.’ I hope that with a new majority the legislature will amplify the people's voice and priorities which are reflected in the New Hope budget."

"Although the recent raises in the minimum wage in New York State are a step forward, the current wage of $11.10 an hour does very little to pull working people out of poverty. We need jobs that pay living wages and provide a decent standard of living. We need union jobs,” said **Mark Emanatian, Director of the Capital District Area Labor Federation**.

**Ron Deutsch, Executive Director of the Fiscal Policy Institute** said, “Now is the time to make long needed investments in our struggling communities. Funding is desperately needed to address the sky-high child poverty rates and increasing homelessness across this State. We need a serious paradigm shift, it’s time to stop investing in failed economic development programs and start investing in our poorest communities.”

**Robb Smith, Executive Director of Interfaith Impact of NYS**, said, “This year, a people-centered philosophy is energizing the New York Senate. For too long, a war against the poor has kept millions from flourishing. This week, that changes. There are some quick fixes. Eliminate cash bail, that ugly remnant of Jim Crow fills our local jails with innocent poor people. Reform our outdated voting laws. And tax wealth so the rich pay their fair share again. There are more ambitious programs. Craft affordable, quality health insurance for all. Eliminate food insecurity. Above all, accept the responsibility to give everyone in New York an opportunity to thrive. We can do it.”

“According to a 2017 Siena College Research Institute Poll, 94% of state residents agree, *no one in New York should go hungry*. Nearly 9 in 10 Capital District residents agree that *government food assistance programs are necessary programs that address a social need*, and we know that community food assistance programs like food pantries are critical to the social safety network,” stated **Natasha Pernicka, Executive Director of Food Pantries for the Capital District.** “More than 59,000 people seek assistance from our coalition of 67 food pantries right here in our New York State Capital Region.  Food for more than 3.3 million meals is provided. Food assistance programs need support to make sure that people do not go without.”

“New York has made great strides by robustly implementing the Affordable Care Act, yet over 1 million New Yorkers still lack health coverage and millions more of us struggle with paying our insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs,” said **Mark Hannay, Director of Metro New York Health Care for All**.  “Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature have an opportunity to take the next steps by expanding coverage to the still-uninsured and addressing high healthcare and drug prices in the short term and moving toward true universal healthcare as envisioned in the New York Health Act over the longer term.”

**Jasmine Gripper, Legislative Director, Alliance for Quality Education said**, "A high-quality education is the foundation for success, but in New York’s poorest ZIP codes, high need students attend the most underfunded schools. The availability of classroom resources closely correlates with students' opportunities and outcomes. Education justice requires adequate and equitably distributed funding for our public schools using the State's Foundation Aid formula and investing the $4 billion that New York State owes to schools."

"The United Nation says we have 12 years to take bold, worldwide action to save life on the planet and avoid catastrophic climate change. Governor Cuomo last month called for 100% clean electricity by 2040 and a Green New Deal. We look forward to seeing his detailed proposals, which much embrace the need for a Just Transition and a new bill of economic rights, starting with a guaranteed living wage job and minimum income for all as well as single payer universal healthcare," said **Mark Dunlea, chairperson of the Green Education and Legal Fund.**

“In his 1941 State of the Union Address FDR argued that everyone in the world should enjoy four basic freedoms, including Freedom from Want - defined as the right to an adequate standard of living in regard to food, housing and healthcare. Those rights have now become clarion calls,” **stated Susan Zimet, Executive Director of Hunger Action Network of NYS.** “In a speech recently given by Governor Cuomo on his priorities for the upcoming year, he spoke of the freedom from want and the importance of addressing these issues. Hunger Action Network just launched *Hunger Hurts: The Human Right to Food Campaign* so this was music to our ears. We look forward to working with Governor Cuomo and the newly constituted legislature to make some significant impacts on these issues in this legislative session.”