



## **Statement of Principles for Fiscal and Social Responsibility During the COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond**

Two million New Yorkers have already lost their jobs because of the economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, and layoffs of CUNY faculty and staff, schoolteachers, health care workers, and local government workers have already begun. New York State and City workers will be next on the chopping block.

Hundreds of thousands of additional job cuts will further devastate our economy and our ability to provide essential services in a time of need.

Working people, poor people and people of color have been hardest hit by the pandemic. They are getting sick and dying in disproportionate numbers, and layoffs have fallen most heavily on lower-wage and precarious workers. Meanwhile the wealth of billionaires and ultra-millionaires has been largely protected — and in many instances has grown significantly.

A new paper by the Public Accountability Initiative documents this growth in inequality in great detail:

“While pre-existing structural inequities have caused the disease and its side-effects to devastate New York’s working-class communities and communities of color, the state’s billionaires have increased their wealth substantially over the course of the pandemic.”

Even before COVID-19, New Yorkers urgently needed major increased public investment in health care, public education from pre-k through higher education, housing, mass transportation and many other fundamental services. That means new revenue raised by taxes on high wealth.

Washington has the responsibility and fiscal resources to aid the states to respond to the unprecedented huge costs and losses brought on by the pandemic. Whatever we do in New York must not be seen as implying that the federal government is in any way relieved of its responsibility. But we must be prepared to deal with federal failures to respond.

The overwhelming majority of New Yorkers will not be affected by our proposals to raise taxes on high wealth. Working and poor New Yorkers rely heavily on public services to help them survive day to day. They are over-taxed and under-served because our tax system does not demand enough from ultra-wealthy New Yorkers.

Times like these require shared sacrifice. In every economic downturn for the last 90 years, our state government has asked the wealthiest to pay more in taxes in order to meet the needs of all the people.

We must do so again, relying on these basic principles of fairness:

- New York State must do everything possible to minimize devastating budget cuts that will increase suffering, especially among poor and working people, place more burdens on strapped municipalities, and stall recovery.
- We must fight to maximize federal aid to fill New York’s gaping budget gap, but we must also be prepared to raise needed revenue from those who can afford to contribute to our recovery. To get through this crisis, we are going to need both massive federal aid and a significant contribution from New York’s most well-heeled residents.
- We must invest in recovery and come back stronger.

During the current crisis, New York’s leadership has confronted the pandemic with an approach rooted in honesty and compassion. As we deal with the economic crisis engendered by the pandemic -- and the great public needs that long preceded the pandemic -- these same values must come to the forefront. And we must remember our progressive roots as a state unafraid to do what’s right — even if that’s a politically tough choice — for its citizens.

Ultra-millionaires and billionaires should not be the only constituency held harmless in this crisis. We are all in this together, and sacrifice must be shared.

**We the undersigned are clear: We will not allow state budget cuts without raising revenue from those who can most afford to pay more.**

#### NYS Legislators

Assemblymember Peter J. Abbate Jr.  
 Assemblymember Tom Abinanti  
 Assemblymember Jeffrion Aubry  
 Assemblymember Brian Barnwell  
 Assemblymember Didi Barrett  
 Assemblymember Charles Barron  
 Assemblymember Michael R. Benedetto  
 Assemblymember Edward Braunstein  
 Assemblymember Harry B. Bronson  
 Assemblymember David Buchwald  
 Assemblymember Pat Burke  
 Assemblymember Robert Carroll  
 Assemblymember William Colton  
 Assemblymember Catalina Cruz  
 Assemblymember Taylor Darling  
 Assemblymember Maritza Davila  
 Assemblymember Michael DenDekker  
 Assemblymember Carmen De La Rosa  
 Assemblymember Joe DeStefano  
 Assemblymember Inez Dickens  
 Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz  
 Assemblymember Steve Englebright  
 Assemblymember Harvey Epstein  
 Assemblymember Pat Fahy

Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez  
 Assemblymember Mathylde Frontus  
 Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick  
 Assemblymember Richard Gottfried  
 Assemblymember Aileen Gunther  
 Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi  
 Assemblymember Pamela Hunter  
 Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman  
 Assemblymember Jonathan Jacobson  
 Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee  
 Assemblymember Kimberly Jean-Pierre  
 Assemblymember Ron Kim  
 Assemblymember Charles David Lavine  
 Assemblymember Joe Lentol  
 Assemblymember Barbara Lifton  
 Assemblymember Donna Lupardo  
 Assemblymember John McDonald III  
 Assemblymember Karen McMahan  
 Assemblymember Michael Miller  
 Assemblymember Walter Mosley  
 Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou  
 Assemblymember Cathy Nolan  
 Assemblymember Danny O’Donnell  
 Assemblymember Felix Ortiz

Assemblymember Steve Otis  
Assemblymember Amy Paulin  
Assemblymember N. Nick Perry  
Assemblymember Victor Pichardo  
Assemblymember Dan Quart  
Assemblymember Karines Reyes  
Assemblymember Diana Richardson  
Assemblymember Robert Rodriguez  
Assemblymember Daniel Rosenthal  
Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal  
Assemblymember Nily Rozic  
Assemblymember Sean Ryan  
Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright  
Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon  
Assemblymember Aravella Simotas  
Assemblymember Michaelle Solages  
Assemblymember Phil Steck  
Assemblymember Al Taylor  
Assemblymember Fred Thiele  
Assemblymember Monica Wallace  
Assemblymember David Weprin  
Assemblymember Jaime R. Williams  
Assemblymember Tremaine Wright  
Assemblymember Kenneth Zebrowski

Senator Brian Benjamin  
Senator Alessandra Biaggi  
Senator Phil Boyle  
Senator Neil Breslin  
Senator John Brooks  
Senator David Carlucci  
Senator James Gaughran  
Senator Michael Gianaris  
Senator Andrew Gounardes  
Senator Pete Harckham  
Senator Brad Hoylman  
Senator Robert Jackson  
Senator Todd Kaminsky  
Senator Anna Kaplan  
Senator Brian Kavanaugh  
Senator Tim Kennedy  
Senator Liz Krueger  
Senator John Liu  
Senator Rachel May  
Senator Jen Metzger  
Senator Shelley Mayer  
Senator Zellnor Myrie  
Senator N. Nick Perry  
Senator Roxanne Persaud  
Senator Jessica Ramos  
Senator Gustavo Rivera  
Senator Diane Savino  
Senator Julia Salazar  
Senator James Sanders Jr.  
Senator Jose Serrano, Jr.  
Senator James Skoufis  
Senator Toby Ann Stavisky  
Senator Kevin Thomas

### **Unions and Organizations**

Fiscal Policy Institute  
Communications Workers of America, District One  
New York State United Teachers  
AFSCME District Council 37  
Strong Economy for All  
New York State Nurses Association  
Professional Staff Congress/CUNY  
Public Employee Federation  
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union  
AFSCME Council 66  
1199 SEIU  
UAW Region 9A  
United University Professions  
AFL-CIO  
32BJ SEIU  
Local One I.A.T.S.E.