

## THE LEGISLATURE

The New York State Constitution vests the State's law-making power in a two-house Legislature composed of a 63-member Senate and a 150-member Assembly. Each representative is elected for two-year terms, with all 213 being elected every two years. The Legislature convenes annually on the first Wednesday after the first Monday in January and remains in session until it concludes its business. The Legislature has many powers set by the State Constitution. These include:

- ◆ ability to propose laws;
- ◆ ability to override a gubernatorial veto if two-thirds of the Senate and Assembly vote to do so;
- ◆ reapportionment of legislative and congressional districts every ten years after the national census;
- ◆ confirmation by the Senate of gubernatorial appointments of non-elected state officials and court judges;
- ◆ proposition of amendments to the State Constitution;
- ◆ voting on ratification of proposed amendments to the Federal Constitution; and
- ◆ creation, regulation and, in some limited cases, abolition of local governments.

The Legislature's Budget authorizes funding for:

- ◆ Senate
- ◆ Assembly
- ◆ A portion of the Lieutenant Governor's office;
- ◆ Fiscal committee operations in each house of the Legislature; and
- ◆ Joint entities that serve both houses of the Legislature.

### Legislative Budget Highlights

The recommended General Fund appropriation of \$217,844,801 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislature represents the *fifth consecutive year* of zero growth. Over the last ten years, total State Funds Spending as reported in the annual Comptroller's Financial Condition Report has risen 55.3%, while the Legislative Budget has grown by only 8.6%. The Legislative Budget has actually *decreased* twice during the past ten years, by 3% in 2009-10, and by 1% the following year. Over this same period, the increase in the Consumer Price Index has been approximately 28%. This year's Legislative Budget continues to reflect a fiscally constrained approach.

The recommended appropriations for Special Revenue Fund-Other appropriation of \$1,600,000 and for Grants and Bequests Funds of \$500,000 for FY 2014-15 represent no changes from the amounts appropriated for FY2013-14. No tax revenues are required for Special Revenue Funds, nor for Grants and Bequests Funds.

## LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The Lieutenant Governor serves as the Senate's President and has a casting vote. The Lieutenant Governor's salary of \$151,500 and also a portion of the operations of the Lieutenant Governor's Office appear within the Legislative Budget.

### **Budget Highlights – Lieutenant Governor**

The recommended appropriation of \$274,635 for FY 2014-15 for the Lieutenant Governor represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

### **SENATE**

The Senate is composed of 63 Members elected for two-year terms from districts around the state. Each Senator represents approximately 308,000 constituents. The Senate conducts its legislative business through the operation of 34 Standing Committees.

The Senate elects from among its Members, for a two-year term, two alternating Temporary Presidents who direct and guide the business of the Senate, appoint Members to Senate Standing Committees, and appoints the Senate's staff. The serving Temporary President acts as the presiding officer in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor or may delegate this duty to another Member. Each Conference of the Senate chooses a Leader from among its membership.

### **Budget Highlights**

The recommended appropriation for the Senate of \$91,903,654 for FY 2014-15 represents the fifth consecutive year of zero growth with no change in the amount of the recommended appropriation. Since January of 2011 the Senate has achieved cost savings by reducing staff levels by over 300 employees, consolidated certain administrative functions and departments, restricted staff travel and created other operational efficiencies that will once again, enable the Senate to operate well within the recommended appropriation of \$91,903,654.

### **ASSEMBLY**

The Assembly is composed of 150 members, from districts around the state, who are elected for two-year terms. Each Member of the Assembly represents approximately 129,000 constituents. The Assembly conducts its legislative business through the operation of 38 standing committees.

The Assembly members elect a Speaker who directs and guides the business of the Assembly, and appoints members to Assembly Standing Committees and Assembly leadership positions. The Speaker serves as the presiding officer of the Assembly. The minority party of the Assembly chooses a Minority Leader from their membership.

### **Budget Highlights - Assembly**

The recommended appropriation for FY 2014-15 of \$102,296,491 represents the fifth consecutive year of zero growth with no change in the amount of the recommended appropriation. Over the past ten years, the Assembly's appropriation has increased by only 8.1%, while the Consumer Price Index has increased by approximately 28%. During this period, the Assembly has controlled its spending through operational efficiencies including a reduction in payroll of over 300 positions.

### **FISCAL COMMITTEES**

The Governor's annual budget bills and the budgetary proposals for the Legislature and Judiciary are referred to the fiscal committees of the Senate and the Assembly when introduced and are reported by them,



with recommendations, to the Legislature. Designated representatives of the committees are constitutionally entitled, to attend the required hearings for the preparation of the budget and to make inquiry concerning any part thereof. These committees also consider all bills introduced in the Legislature carrying appropriations or providing for State expenditures.

In addition, the Chairmen and ranking Minority Members of the Senate Finance Committee and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee function as an Audit Committee, with the responsibility to select an independent certified public accountant to conduct an audit of the state's annual financial statements, receive the results of such independent audit, and submit the resulting audit certification to the State Comptroller for the State's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

### **Budget Highlights – Fiscal Committees**

The recommended appropriation of \$5,830,456 for FY 2014-15 for the Assembly Ways and Means Committee represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14. The Senate Finance Committee is funded as part of the Senate's total budget.

## **JOINT ENTITIES AND DUES PAYMENTS**

### **LEGISLATIVE ETHICS COMMISSION**

The Legislative Ethics Commission, established by Chapter 14 of the laws of 2007 and amended by Chapter 399 of the Laws of 2011, is a joint bipartisan commission comprised of four legislators and five non-legislative members. The Commission's duties, enumerated by Section 80 of the Legislative Law, include, distribution, collection and review of financial disclosure statements from legislators, employees and candidates for legislative office, issuance of formal, binding, advisory opinions and adjudication of violations of Public Officers Law based upon substantial basis investigation reports received from the Joint Commission on Public Ethics. The Commission is also required to develop educational materials and ethics training in conjunction with and at the request of the Legislature, respond to informal requests for guidance, maintain a public website and prepare reports as required by statute.

### **LEGISLATIVE HEALTH SERVICE**

Section 7-b of the Legislative Law provides for a legislative emergency health station for the use of members and employees of the Legislature and legislative correspondents, to be staffed by a registered nurse and suitably and adequately equipped to administer first aid.

### **LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY**

Section 7-a of the Legislative Law provides for a Legislative Library to be located in the State Capitol, conveniently accessible to the members of both houses of the Legislature.

### **LEGISLATIVE MESSENGER SERVICE**

The Legislative Messenger Service trains individuals with disabilities as messengers who provide a communications network throughout the Empire State Plaza and neighboring state buildings for Senate and Assembly legislators and their staffs.

### **LEGISLATIVE BILL DRAFTING COMMISSION**

The Legislative Bill Drafting Commission is composed of two commissioners jointly appointed by the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly. The Commission drafts or aids in the drafting of legislative bills and resolutions, and may advise as to the constitutionality, consistency or effect of proposed legislation upon request of a member or committee of either house of the Legislature.

The Commission maintains and operates the Legislative Retrieval Service, a databank of New York State statutes and rules and regulations of state agencies. The Commission's budget covers the cost of staff, office leases, equipment and supplies, and the printing of legislative bills, session laws, Senate and Assembly Journals, and the Legislative Digest. The Commission receives revenues from the private sale of subscriptions to the Legislative Digest and to the Legislative Retrieval Service (LRS), which are deposited into the Legislative Computer Services Fund, a Special Revenue Fund, and used to offset the costs of operating the Commission's computer systems.

### **LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT**

The Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment was established by Chapter 45 of the laws of 1978, and provides technical plans for meeting the Legislature's responsibility for reapportionment of Senate, Assembly and Congressional districts. Using a Geographic Information System database, it also conducts research projects relating to the collection and use of census data and other statistical information. The Task Force revenues received from the sale of data and services are deposited in the Legislative Computer Services Fund, and may be used to offset the Task Force's costs.

### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES DUES**

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) is a bi-partisan organization created to serve the legislators and staff of each State Legislature. NCSL provides research, technical assistance, a forum for discussion and information on developments in state-federal relations. All state legislators and their staff members are eligible to participate in the Conference, which is supported from dues assessed to each State Legislature based on state population totals.

### **Budget Highlights – Joint Entities**

The recommended appropriation of \$376,949 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Ethics Commission represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

The recommended appropriation of \$211,266 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Health Service represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.



The recommended appropriation of \$798,221 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Library represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

The recommended appropriation of \$907,830 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Messenger Service represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

The recommended appropriation of \$13,009,482 for FY2014-15 for the Legislative Bill Drafting Commission represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

The recommended appropriation of \$1,500,000 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Computer Services Fund represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14. No tax revenues are required for this Fund.

The recommended appropriation of \$1,858,759 for FY 2014-15 for the Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

The recommended appropriation of \$377,058 for FY 2014-15 for the National Conference of State Legislatures dues represents no change from the amount appropriated for FY 2013-14.

**ALL FUNDS REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LEGISLATURE**

FUND/ENTITY/MAJOR PURPOSE	APPROPRIATION 2013-14	REQUESTED 2014-15	CHANGE FROM 2013-14
<b>General Fund:</b>			
Lt. Governor	274,635	274,635	0
Senate	91,903,654	91,903,654	0
Assembly	102,296,491	102,296,491	0
Assembly Ways and Means Committee	5,830,456	5,830,456	0
<b>Joint Entities:</b>			
Legislative Ethics Commission	376,949	376,949	0
National Conference of State Legislatures Dues	377,058	377,058	0
Legislative Health Service	211,266	211,266	0
Legislative Library	798,221	798,221	0
Legislative Messenger Service	907,830	907,830	0
Legislative Bill Drafting Commission	13,009,482	13,009,482	0
Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research Reapportionment	1,858,759	1,858,759	0
<b>Joint Entities Total</b>	<b>17,539,565</b>	<b>17,539,565</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>217,844,801</b>	<b>217,844,801</b>	<b>0</b>
Special Revenue Fund - Other:			
Legislative Computer Services Fund	1,500,000	1,500,000	0
Senate Recyclable Materials, Information Services and Conference Fund	50,000	50,000	0
Assembly Recyclable Materials, Information Services and Conference Fund	50,000	50,000	0
<b>SPECIAL REVENUE FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Grants and Bequests Fund:			
Restoration of Senate Chamber	250,000	250,000	0
Restoration of Assembly Chamber	250,000	250,000	0
<b>GRANTS AND BEQUESTS FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>