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In this Issue

[State of the State Speeches](#)**[Quick Links](#)**
(External Sites)[NYS Department
of Health](#)[NYS DOH –
Meetings,
Hearings &
Special Events](#)[Medicaid
Redesign Team](#)[Senate Health
Committee
Website](#)[Assembly Health
Committee
Updates](#)[NYS Division of
Budget](#)**State of the State Speeches**

On Monday, January 09, 2017, Governor Cuomo held two of the planned six State of the State speeches, first in New York City and a second speech in Buffalo, outlining his agenda for the upcoming year. The speeches highlighted the overall successes over the last few years in reducing State Government spending, attracting private jobs to New York, and significant investments in infrastructure throughout the State. For the upcoming year, the Governor outlined a “middle class recovery act” that seeks to assist the middle-class and protect progressive values through increased education, job and industry development, and continued infrastructure investments.

While the Governor has already introduced a number of proposals for 2017 over the past few days (at this time 12 proposals), the initial day of speeches highlighted the following proposals:

- Free tuition plan for middle class students who attend state colleges, CUNY and community colleges, allowing students whose families earn less than \$125,000 per year to qualify to attend college tuition-free at all public universities in New York State;
- Reforms to the criminal justice system, which includes a public-private law firm partnership to provide legal representation to immigrants regardless of citizenship status, video-taping of interrogations for serious offenses, a reform of the bail system to weigh the public safety risks of arrestees, and raising the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18;
- Closure of the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Westchester County by 2021;
- Enactment of ride-sharing legislation legalizing ride-sharing in Upstate NY, noting the unfair duality of ride-sharing being legal in New York City;
- Continue the State’s investment in the Buffalo Billion program and increased financial support to the Western Region through Buffalo Billion Squared, which includes \$500 million in infrastructure, tourism, a light-rail extension, and community development projects for areas surrounding Buffalo; and
- Invest \$2 billion in drinking water infrastructure that would include improving local wastewater treatment systems, develop and implement local community

recommendations for water source protection to be funded by the Environmental Protection Fund, and increasing the state Superfund to expedite the cleanup of hazardous waste that may impact drinking water sources.

Proposals on the Governor's agenda in the healthcare sector were notably limited. In response to federal threats to the Affordable Care Act, the Governor stated "individual health is public health and quality affordable healthcare is a human right" and that New York will not allow gains in Medicaid coverage and private insurance coverage to be erased. The Governor has pledged to work with 1199SEIU and the Greater New York Hospital Association to make sure that doesn't happen. In New York City, the Governor also proposed to provide \$50 million in funding for Montefiore Hospital System in order to maintain access to affordable healthcare and to turn Brooklyn into a "model for wellness" by using prevention strategies, such as recreation centers, community centers, and expanded food options, to improve population health.

The Governor also introduced a proposal, which was not addressed in either speech, to invest \$650 million to spur the growth of a world-class life science research cluster in New York. Under the proposal, the State would provide \$17 million in capital funding to launch JLABS @ NYC – a collaboration between Johnson & Johnson Innovation and the New York Genome Center to build a 30,000 square foot incubator with capacity for up to 30 life science startups in New York City. The proposal would also include \$250 million in tax incentives for new and existing life science companies, \$200 million over ten years in state capital grants to support investment in wet-lab and innovation space, make more than 4.2 million square feet of innovation space and 2,038 acres of developable land available tax free at 62 colleges and universities statewide, and provide \$100 million in investment capital for early stage life science initiatives.

[Back to Top.](#)

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