NYSAC
NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

NYSAC Budget Priority

Parity for Counties

The Governor's 30-day amendments reflect a shared commitment to stronger, more fiscally stable local governments. NYSAC supports the additional funding provided to New York City for its health care system and the restoration of $510 million in recurring revenues.

These investments recognize the importance of what local governments do for New Yorkers. We ask the Legislature to extend that same recognition to counties by providing **$100 million in county relief in the one-house budgets.**

A Longstanding Fiscal Gap

Counties have not received Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM) since 1990, when unrestricted aid for counties was phased out as part of an agreement tied to preschool special education funding—a state commitment that was never fully honored. That represents a **$200 million** annual loss, totaling more than **$7 billion** since 1990.

NYSAC's Ask

$100 Million in County Relief in the One-House Budgets

The Legislature has an opportunity to begin closing this gap. Options that could achieve $100 million in county relief—individually or in combination—include:

- **County Infrastructure Grant Program** — Increasing this infrastructure investment program from $50 million to $150 million annually would support housing development and economic growth in communities across the state.
- **18-B Assigned Counsel** — Increasing the state's share from 50% to 100% of increased rates would reduce county costs by approximately $92 million statewide, addressing a longstanding inequity in how the right to counsel is funded.
- **Preschool Special Education** — Reducing the county share by five percentage points would generate over $100 million in combined local savings, honoring a commitment the state made decades ago and has yet to fulfill.
- **Competency Restoration (CPL § 730)** — Restoring the 50/50 state-county cost share that was shifted administratively in 2020 would address a growing cost burden counties cannot manage or predict.

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Counties Are New York's Essential Government

New York's 57 counties outside New York City are the level of government responsible for delivering the most complex, costly, and heavily mandated services. These include a wide range of federal and state mandated programs that counties are required to administer and fund on behalf of the state. Below is a small sample of the programs that counties are responsible for.

- **Foster care, child welfare and adult protective care** — protecting the state's most vulnerable children, the elderly and administering the full continuum of preventive, protective, and placement services.
- **Medicaid, SNAP, and HEAP** — connecting hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers to health coverage, food assistance, and home heating support.
- **Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education** — serving children with disabilities from birth through age five, a mandate that grows more expensive each year.
- **Indigent legal defense** — fulfilling the constitutional right to counsel for New Yorkers who cannot afford an attorney.
- **Public health protection** — county health departments are the front line of disease surveillance, maternal and child health, immunization, environmental health protection, and emergency preparedness; we provided the infrastructure that held New York together during COVID-19 and every public health crisis before it.
- **Mental health competency restoration** — a growing, court-ordered mandate that counties cannot control, predict, or decline.

These are not local choices. They are state and federal obligations that counties fulfill on behalf of all New Yorkers—with limited flexibility, rising costs, and inadequate state reimbursement.

Counties are not asking for new programs. We are asking the Legislature provide **$100 million of relief to fund the work counties already do**—on the state's behalf—for every New Yorker.