



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

April 26, 2007

Contact: 212-788-7117
Release # 2007-038

SPEAKER QUINN RESPONDS TO MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE BUDGET

*Council to give thorough review to proposals;
Responding to Council priorities, budget baselines funds for District Attorneys
and funds state-of-the-art primary care clinics*

New York, NY – City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn today responded to the Mayor's executive budget, recognizing the Mayor for balancing tax breaks, new programs and responsible long term planning. She pledged that the Council would give thorough and thoughtful review to the Mayor's Executive Budget, including examining proposed agency reductions and the impact they will have on agency performance and on the City as a whole.

The Council will also closely review Mayor Bloomberg's debt proposal and savings plan. Recognizing the need for continued long-term planning and savings as possible economic downturns lie ahead, Speaker Quinn will continue to push Albany for a Rainy Day Fund. While continuing to support the sales tax reduction, the property tax rebate and the joint push by the Council and the administration for tax relief for small businesses, the Speaker also intends to push further for the Renters Tax Credit proposed in her State of the City address.

Speaker Quinn also applauded the Bloomberg administration for accepting the Council's proposal to baseline \$13 million for the District Attorney's offices with an additional \$5 million to step up prosecution of child abuse. Similarly, the Speaker was pleased with the plan to allocate increased funding for land acquisition in the Catskill/Delaware Watershed. The Mayor's January plan had budgeted less than \$52 million toward this effort but the number has now been increased to \$320 million over ten years. Furthermore, signaling a commitment to Speaker Quinn's proposal to develop 10 State of the Art Health Clinics in high need communities, the administration pledged funding for the Council's primary care initiative.

"Mayor Bloomberg has prudently offered both tax breaks and new programs while keeping spending in check and saving for the future. We look forward to reviewing this budget in further detail, and to productive discussions with the Bloomberg administration over the coming weeks to achieve a fiscally responsible budget that serves New Yorkers and protects core city services," said **Speaker Quinn**. "In a win for ongoing budget reform, we are pleased that for a second year in a row, the Mayor has accepted and included Council priorities in his Executive Budget. District Attorneys will get the resources they need to prosecute crimes, including child abuse, the City will have a more aggressive approach to preserving the quality of our drinking water, and we can improve access to top quality primary health care in highest need neighborhoods."

Finance Chair David Weprin, said, “In light of our multi-billion dollar surplus, we need to make sure that the proposed cuts in the Mayor's PEG plan to the city's agencies don't seriously hamper their ability to perform at the level that New Yorkers expect. In the days ahead, we are going to review the Mayor's executive budget and make sure that none of these cuts affects essential agency services.”

District Attorney Offices

Following the Council's call over the past year for increasing and stabilizing funding for the District Attorneys, \$12.9 million will now be baselined in their annual budgets. Also, following the Speaker's proposal in her preliminary budget response, \$5 million in additional funding will be directed to the DA's and the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (OSNP) to investigate and prosecute child abuse, gun violence and Internet crime.

“New York City's District Attorneys deserve credit for making this a city of law and order,” said **Speaker Quinn**. “Our City's District Attorney Offices prosecute cases and get criminals off our streets, prevent truancy, treat drug addiction, reintegrate prisoners into our communities, train seniors in safety measures and provide domestic violence assistance. We must ensure that they have the resources they need to do their jobs. I applaud Mayor Bloomberg's response to our call for more resources and for a more stable funding stream for our District Attorneys.”

“It seems like everyday we hear of another community rocked by a senseless shooting or read about another helpless victim of child abuse,” said **Public Safety Committee Chair, Peter Vallone**. “With the help of this additional funding, District Attorneys will have more resources to investigate and prosecute criminals who inflict irreparable damage on our communities. I want to thank the Mayor and the Speaker for their hard work and dedication to increasing public safety.”

“When a crime targets an innocent child, we have a responsibility to prosecute that case as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. The City has done much to improve preventative services in the past few years, and to increase reporting of suspected child abuse. With this new funding, our DAs will finally be able to keep up with the abuse cases reported, and we will take a major step forward in protecting the youth of our City,” said **Youth Services Chair Lewis Fidler**.

Primary Health Care Facilities

The budget also provides year one expense support to the Speaker's proposal to create 10 State of the Art primary care clinics in high need communities. When developed, these clinics will accept public health insurance and will offer affordable services to the uninsured, and strive to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate service.

“Anyone who doubts the need to expand primary care in underserved communities only has to visit the emergency rooms at local hospitals. You'll see lines of New Yorkers waiting for the basic care they should be receiving from neighborhood clinics, or being treated for problems that could be avoided with preventative services. I want to thank Speaker Quinn and Mayor Bloomberg for their leadership in providing quality primary care to the neighborhoods that need it the most,” said **Health Committee Chair Joel Rivera**.

Watershed Land Acquisition

The Council's budget response also proposed increasing the funds for acquisition of land in the Catskill/Delaware Watershed, which provides 90% of New York City's drinking water. The Mayor has increased funding to \$320 million over ten years. Acquiring land in areas surrounding the State's reservoirs prevents development and is the best means to protect the City's drinking water. This will also mean the City won't have to build a water filtration plant, which would cost an additional \$6 to \$10 billion.

"Since first being elected to the City Council and appointed chair of the Council's Environmental Protection Committee, I have made ensuring the continued high-quality of New York City's drinking water one of my very top priorities," said **Council Member James F. Gennaro, Chair of the Environmental Protection Committee**. "Because of this, I am simply delighted that Speaker Quinn and I have been successful in helping to secure substantial additional funding for land acquisition in the city's watershed. This funding will not only add critical protections for our precious drinking water supply, but it will also help New Yorkers avoid devastating further increases in their water bills."

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