

## Local Leaders React to Budget

by Diana Palotas  
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It seems no one is really shouting for joy in reaction to the proposed state budget. The leader of the Rochester Business Alliance says she's never been angrier.

Sandy Parker says the budget wastes a golden opportunity for serious reform and is a bad budget for business.

At a time of economic crisis, it raises taxes and fees, "And does nothing to reign in spending that has been out of control for decades even when Wall Street was booming," Parkers says.



Sandy Parker calls it a bad budget.

Parker, who also speaks on behalf of Unshackle Upstate, says rather than taking progressive steps to make New York more business friendly to spur private sector investment and job creation, this budget does just the opposite.

"A three-year income tax surcharge on small businesses. \$230 million in new taxes on health insurance on top of \$500 million added in January's deficit reduction package. And surcharges on gas and electric utility companies that will cost consumers about \$500 million," she adds.

She says the budget is a backbreaker, that will drive the small companies that are the economic engines in New York to move out of state. Unshackle Upstate is calling on legislators, especially five key democratic senators, to reject the budget proposal.

### Medical Society Reacts to Budget

Nancy Adams of the Monroe County Medical Society says while the latest deal contains fewer cuts than health care expected she worries. "Can the hospitals even afford to add one bed. We do already have people lined up in the hallways and the emergency rooms and if we can't have those beds in a timely fashion how are we going to take care of this growing demand?"



The budget agreed to by state leadership includes a record health care savings package of \$2.3 billion . The governor says it also permanently reforms the state's Medicaid hospital reimbursement system to lower costs while improving patient outcomes. The savings will be invested in primary and preventive care for New Yorkers.

Adams says, "I think that's actually the key to fixing the broken health care system."

But it will take years before we see the benefits of this reform. In the interim, the proposed budget includes \$75 million for transition costs.

“I am very interested to know how those funds will help the hospitals through this difficult time and what happens when this money runs out,” says Adams.

The full legislature votes Tuesday on the budget. The deadline is Wednesday.

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