

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Delivers Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Address

02/27/2024

"Making New Jersey the Best Place to Raise a Family"

Lieutenant Governor Way.

Senate President Scutari.

Assembly Speaker Coughlin.

Majority Leaders Ruiz and Greenwald. Minority Leaders Bucco and DiMaio. Members of the 221st Legislature, with special thanks to the bipartisan escort committee that walked me into this chamber.

Chief Justice Rabner and Judge Grant.

Members of the Cabinet. Senior staff.

Former Governors DiFrancesco, McGreevey, Codey, and Corzine.

And at this point, I would usually say "First Lady Tammy Murphy," she sends her regrets. But Charlie and Sam are here with us to represent team Murphy.

Distinguished faith leaders, veterans our brothers and sisters in organized labor, special guests, friends.

And my fellow New Jerseyans.

Last night, I had the honor of joining His Eminence Metropolitan Antony and His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America to commemorate the Day of Resistance to the Occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol, which began 10 years ago this month.

We joined together – alongside members of New Jersey's Ukrainian American community – to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in their ongoing and heroic fight for freedom.

This past Saturday marked the second anniversary of Vladimir Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine. And on Friday, I was with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States – my very good friend – Oksana Markarova.

For more than two years, the Ukrainian people have sacrificed everything.

Their homes. Their loved ones. Their entire way of life.

And there is no starker contrast to their remarkable bravery than the inaction of the Members of Congress who are refusing to pass urgently needed humanitarian and military aid for Ukraine.



They must pass this funding immediately.

And let me be absolutely clear: Here in New Jersey, we stand — and we will always stand — with Ukraine. As long as it takes.

And I am incredibly honored that Archbishop Daniel is here in the well with us today.

Slava Ukraini. And may God be with the free People of Ukraine.

Over the past six years, in a world with no shortage of challenges, we have seen the very best of New Jersey.

We have seen it in the dedication of the working people who keep our state — and our economy — moving.

We have seen it in the families who — despite living in a time of uncertainty — wake up every morning with rock solid determination to keep pushing forward.

And we have seen it in the parents who make every decision, and every sacrifice, to provide their children a better future.

Parents like my own.

A father, who never finished high school, but worked odd jobs to keep food on the table. And a mother who balanced the demands of raising four kids — while also working full-time as a secretary.

Growing up, in my family, we depended on each other to get through hard times.

And today, that same sentiment applies to our entire New Jersey family.

We all depend on the working New Jerseyans who have had our backs during hard times and who deserve leaders who have their backs, too.

So, it is for the working- and middle-class families of New Jersey that we have crafted our proposed budget for the 2025 fiscal year.

It is a budget that delivers on the promises we have made to the people of New Jersey since day one.

A budget that will make life more affordable for more families — by lowering costs and increasing opportunities.

A budget that balances the responsibility of spending within our means — while stretching every dollar to lift up our neighbors in need.

And it is a budget that will protect our fundamental rights and freedoms — from voting rights, to reproductive rights, to every right in between.

Simply put: our budget will ensure that New Jersey retains its proud reputation as the best place, anywhere in America, to raise a family.

And that vision applies to every family. Especially those who feel as if they have been forgotten.

And it is easy to understand why.

Today, we live in a world embroiled in disruption. A world that has been jolted by inflation, supply chain snarls, two full-on wars, climate change — and so much more.

And while all of these challenges are global in scale, in many ways, they hit our families — here at home — the hardest. Most importantly, in the form of higher costs and heightened anxieties.

So at a time when those at the very top are doing better than ever many of our families are struggling just to afford

basic necessities. Groceries. Diapers. Clothes. Car repairs. On and on.

The fact is, right now, millions of families across New Jersey — indeed, across America — are making tough decisions about where to cut costs and how to save more money at the end of month.

And frankly, those kitchen table conversations are no different than the conversations we are having, right here in Trenton.

At a moment of economic uncertainty and unease, how do we — as a state — move forward?

Well, here is the good news: we are prepared to meet this moment.

New Jersey is prepared to face our challenges — confidently, capably, and ambitiously.

And we are prepared, because over the past six plus years — together — we have restored fiscal responsibility while remaining true to our values.

We have saved money where we can — so we can invest more where it counts: strengthening the economic and societal foundation of New Jersey.

And, unlike previous administrations — of both parties — we have refused to abandon our commitments to our pension system, our public education system, and our public transit system.

But — more than anything — we have put the needs of our families ahead of the demands of special interests.

And that remains our single-highest priority: investing in the long-term success of our families, our children, our seniors, and every community in New Jersey.

And we are going to start by addressing one of the most persistent costs plaguing our families: taxes.

Our proposed budget will once again lower costs for middle- and working-class families — as well as seniors — by providing another round of historic tax relief.

That includes the single-largest property tax relief program in our history: The ANCHOR Program. Last year, it provided more than \$2.2 billion in direct relief to millions of homeowners, renters, and especially seniors.

So, at a time when families are grappling with higher prices at the checkout counter, we are putting more money back into their pockets than ever before.

Since it was introduced, the ANCHOR Program has effectively lowered property taxes down to levels that, in many cases, our families have not seen in a decade.

And with our budget, the ANCHOR Program — as well as the Senior Freeze Program — will be expanding, so we can deliver even more property tax relief to tens of thousands of additional families and seniors.

Altogether, our budget will put more than \$3.5 billion back into the pockets of New Jersey's taxpayers.

With us today is Ms. Lestine Robinson who rents her home in the great Silk City of Paterson, New Jersey.

She is a grandmother of four and serves her community as President of the St. Luke Baptist Church Missionary Ministry. We thank you for your service, Ms. Robinson.

Last year, Ms. Robinson was one of more than 600,000 seniors in New Jersey who received a \$250 bonus with their ANCHOR payment.

And this year, we are going to give her — and thousands of seniors like her — another bonus payment.

But ANCHOR is not the only program that will help New Jerseyans save money on their taxes.

Our budget will also provide over \$700 million in direct relief to New Jersey families through the: Child Tax Credit, the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and the Earned Income Tax Credit, among other programs.

And for seniors, our budget will invest \$200 million more into the Stay NJ program, led by Speaker Coughlin, which will make it even more affordable for grandparents to stay close to their kids and grandkids, here in New Jersey.

And to provide even greater financial relief to our seniors, our budget will also bring down the costs of prescription drugs.

Since 2021, we have helped tens of thousands of seniors enroll in the Pharmaceutical Assistance for the Aged and Disabled – also known as PAAD – and Senior Gold programs.

And our budget will continue supporting these initiatives, so seniors will not have to worry about affording potentially life-saving medication.

From lowering the cost of prescription drugs to lightening the weight of property taxes – our budget will help more families save more money.

But after years of inflation, let us also be honest: these efforts to lower costs are merely a starting point. Our families have earned this relief – and oftentimes, it only helps them offset rising costs.

So, we need to do more. We need to invest in the long-term financial health of every family – especially Black and Brown families that have endured generations of disinvestment – so they can raise their kids comfortably in the Garden State.

That is precisely why our budget will help millions of families feel more financially secure, in nearly every facet of life. Like saving for retirement.

Our budget will fund a new program we are calling RetireReady NJ, which will provide nearly every worker – particularly those who do not have a pension or 401(k) – an option to invest in a retirement savings plan.

And I want to thank the Legislature for making New Jersey one of the only states in America to offer this opportunity to our families.

Enrolling in RetireReady NJ is entirely free. So you can start preparing for a dignified retirement at no extra cost.

We are also going to help our families cover the cost of their medical bills, by making health insurance more affordable for more families.

In recent years, thanks to the investments we have made together, more New Jerseyans than ever before have signed up for health insurance.

Just last year, nearly 400,000 people enrolled in a plan through Get Covered New Jersey – a record high!

And our budget will help push those historic numbers even higher, by funding programs like Cover All Kids, which will help tens of thousands more children access the care they need.

Additionally, we are going to provide relief to the one in ten of our neighbors who have medical debt in collections.

And that number is even higher in Black and Brown communities.

Last month, in my State of the State Address, I called on our legislature to pass the Louisa Carman Medical Debt Relief Act, which will help protect our families from falling into crushing medical debt.

And as we continue to advance this legislative package our budget will invest in cracking down on predatory medical debt collectors and prevent them from harassing our families.

Moreover, our budget will also make it more affordable for our families to keep a roof over their heads.

Since 2018, we have invested more than half a billion dollars into increasing the supply of affordable housing in New Jersey. And these investments are paying off.

Last year — for instance — New Jersey permitted more new housing units than New York state for the first time ever. And they have ten million more residents than we do!

But — we need to keep building.

Because New Jersey is popular — and the demand for housing continues to outpace supply.

And I want to thank the members of our Legislature who are working with great intensity and determination to pass legislation that will accelerate the process for building new affordable housing units.

In fact, in anticipation of this legislation, our budget will increase funding for the construction of new affordable housing units all across New Jersey.

To give you one example, we will support the construction of new Accessory Dwelling Units, which will enable homeowners to convert their garage or attic into an apartment, in which a loved one, or even a local renter, can move into.

This will help more New Jerseyans find a safe place to call home and save more money at the end of the month.

And for parents with young children, our budget will help lower their monthly costs, as well, by taking a major step forward in making free, universal pre-K a reality in New Jersey. It will add over 1,000 seats to our state's pre-schools — at no additional cost to our parents.

That is tens of thousands of dollars in savings, for individual families, every single year. And — by giving our kids a jumpstart in their academic careers — we will help prepare them for successful professional careers, at the same time.

We also know that, for many parents, pre-K is just one of the many costs that keep them up at night.

In counties like Cumberland, Atlantic, and Essex, more than one in five households with children struggle with food insecurity.

Let us be clear: no child in New Jersey should ever go hungry.

And our budget will help prevent that injustice by investing \$30 million more into providing free school meals to 60,000 additional children.

There are some politicians, in other states, who do not consider this a priority.

Instead of feeding our kids, they want to get rid of child labor laws and put our kids to work.

Well, we do things differently here in New Jersey. We are ridding hunger from our lunchrooms and putting more kids in our classrooms.

And let me thank Speaker Coughlin for his commitment to the cause of ending child hunger and Senate President Scutari, who is committed to not only caring for the physical well-being of our children, but their mental well-being, as well.

You cannot put a price tag on the health and well-being of our children.

This is the most sacred investment we can make.

For that very same reason, I am honored to report that the single largest investment in our budget is dedicated to New Jersey's best-in-the-nation public education system.

Our budget will increase funding for New Jersey's public schools by more than \$900 million.

And with this funding, our administration is officially delivering on a promise we have made since day one.

We will be the first administration, in our state's history, to fully fund New Jersey's school funding formula.

It is worth taking stock of how far we have come in this journey to fully fund our public education system.

During the last administration, our schools were underfunded by \$9 billion.

When we entered office, we knew that restoring that funding would not happen overnight.

It would be a marathon, not a sprint. In fact, a seven-year marathon to fully invest in the success of every student, in every school district.

And with our budget, we are going to do exactly that.

This will be the most significant investment into our public schools in history.

And there is a simple reason we are keeping this promise.

It's because we need to cultivate the potential of every student any way we can – whether they live in Cranbury or Camden.

That also means equipping our state's educators with every tool they need to help our children learn and grow.

Educators like Talithe Duncan, who is here with us today. Talithe has taught K-12 students, here in Trenton, for more than 20 years!

And currently, she serves as President of the Trenton Education Association.

Our budget will increase funding for public schools in Trenton, so we can better support educators like Talithe and all of our students.

And importantly, fully funding our public schools will benefit every New Jerseyan – whether or not you have kids in school. Because every additional dollar we spend on public education is a dollar our taxpayers get to save in property taxes.

So we are strengthening our public schools and helping taxpayers save more money at the same time. Those are promises kept.

And, I may add, there is a bigger reason we are able keep these promises to our students, to our taxpayers, and to our families.

It is because we – together – have balanced our books without relying on financial tricks or gimmicks.

During tough times, we didn't cancel a tunnel to plug a hole in our finances.

No, we rolled up our sleeves and started cleaning up the fiscal mess in Trenton. We made responsible choices while also staying true to our values.

I promised – from day one – that instead of short-changing our public schools or skimping on our pension payments we would invest in the long-term success of our state.

We promised to build a stronger economy to support our vision for a fairer New Jersey. And our strategy is working.

We saw an example of that just last month – when the Department of Treasury retired nearly \$500 million in state debt.

Now, I get it — when most folks hear about debt defeasance, they are ready to doze off.

But, this means real financial relief. For potentially millions of families.

Because by paying our debts today, instead of kicking the can down to our kids, we have saved taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars over time.

That debt retirement we announced last month will save taxpayers about \$160 million alone.

In fact, since we started paying down our state's debt roughly three years ago, we have saved taxpayers a total of more than \$1.3 billion.

So we are securing historic savings for our taxpayers — and making historic progress in meeting our sacred obligations all at the same time.

And with our budget, we will once again meet a major obligation for the fourth year in a row: making a full payment into New Jersey's pension system.

Back in 2021, when we first proposed this, it was the first time a full payment had been made into New Jersey's pension system in more than 25 years.

So with our budget, we are going to keep our promise to the thousands of women and men in organized labor — who are the backbone of our state — for the fourth straight year.

We are proving that New Jersey can be trusted again.

In the past two years alone, New Jersey has secured seven credit rating upgrades!

To put that into context, the last time New Jersey's credit rating was upgraded, the iPhone did not yet exist. And the last time, before that, was during the administration of President Jimmy Carter.

So we went from two credit rating upgrades in about 30 years to seven upgrades in fewer than 30 months.

And like those debt payments, these upgrades save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars over time.

So today, we are no longer robbing our kids of their future — we are investing in it.

In that same spirit, I am pleased to say our budget will include a surplus of over \$6 billion, which will prepare us for any rainy days that lie ahead.

This is what fiscal responsibility is all about.

Meeting our commitments instead of abandoning them.

Balancing our books instead of fudging the numbers.

And investing the money we save back into our communities — so we can set every child up for success and help every senior retire in dignity.

A former President who once spoke in this chamber — you may have heard of him, Abraham Lincoln — advised, "you cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today."

Well, here in New Jersey, we are not evading our responsibilities.

We are facing them head on.

We are putting an end to the games and the gimmicks, and we are working to hand our children a state that is better

than we found it.

Thanks to the leadership of State Treasurer Liz Muoio, and her entire team, we are spending taxpayer money with the same degree of care and consideration that every working family spends their money.

And to ensure we continue spending wisely, and that our state remains steady in stormy waters, I am – respectfully – asking our legislative partners to do their part, as well.

At a time when families are struggling to balance their budgets – let us keep our spending in check.

And by the way, that goes for our entire administration.

I am not asking anything of you that we are not asking of ourselves.

In fact, with our budget proposal, we have largely capped all new discretionary spending.

We are making hard choices to keep New Jersey on the right track, so we can keep investing in the needs of our families.

We are proving that maintaining fiscal responsibility gives us greater leeway to meet our moral responsibilities.

And that is how we will continue building a state where every family can find their steppingstone – like my family did – into the middle class.

In fact, one of our proudest accomplishments in building a stronger and fairer New Jersey is rejecting the false choice that you either have to side with workers or business owners.

That dog-eat-dog mentality has failed us before.

And in New Jersey, we are demonstrating that building a stronger economy means cultivating a fairer playing field for everyone.

It means supporting, as our administration has, every worker's fundamental right to collectively bargain.

And from 2022 to 2023, when the percentage of union jobs nationwide remained flat, we increased the number of unionized workers in New Jersey by 60,000.

And by the way, 60,000 appears to be the winning number, because that is also the number of new small businesses that have opened their doors in New Jersey since we took office.

So, together, we have helped launch a new generation of family-owned businesses and we have created a new generation of family-supporting, union jobs.

And with our budget, we will build upon this economic momentum by creating new opportunities for young New Jerseyans to launch their careers.

Especially in fields that continue to see critical workforce shortages – like education and health care.

Our budget will provide funding for Student-Teacher Stipends – to help aspiring educators begin their careers – as well as \$5 million for New Jersey's Teacher Loan Redemption program, to provide student loan debt relief to educators throughout our state.

And our budget will also invest \$5 million into creating a new Nursing Workforce Initiative.

It will help address our nursing shortage by recruiting and supporting aspiring nurses across New Jersey – from helping pay off their student loans to funding training grants.

This initiative will be a lifeline for nurses in training, like one with us today, Mariluz Lantigua De Peralta.

Mariluz is a student at the Trinitas School of Nursing in Elizabeth. She has been living in Union County since 2016, when she immigrated to the United States from the Dominican Republic.

Mariluz says that, when she graduates this upcoming May, it will be the culmination of her very own American Dream.

And with our Nursing Workforce Initiative, we will make sure aspiring nurses like Mariluz can worry less about affording rent – and focus more on saving lives.

Thank you, Mariluz. Your story is the quintessential American story.

And it is a reminder that we all rely on the immigrant workers who keep the lights on in New Jersey.

In that same spirit, let us recognize that creating opportunities – for every New Jerseyan – is not just about jobs or GDP growth.

It is also about defending the fundamental rights of everyone – from immigrant families, to members of the LGBTQIA+ community, to every community – so we all have the freedom to achieve our own American Dream.

That is why our budget will ensure New Jersey remains a safe haven for fundamental freedoms.

It will invest in protecting voting rights, so our state's defenders of democracy, led by Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State Tahesha Way, have every resource they need to ensure voters can access the ballot box.

It will invest in protecting religious freedoms and securing houses of worship, which is crucial at a moment when antisemitism and Islamophobia are exploding.

And of course, our budget will invest in protecting reproductive freedoms as well – with more than \$50 million dedicated to ensuring every woman can make her own decisions about her own body.

Together, we will continue building a more just, inclusive, and equitable New Jersey.

And we will also continue lifting up our neighbors who have been left behind – especially those to whom we owe a debt of gratitude that we can never fully repay.

Our veterans. I would like to ask all of our veterans here today to please stand.

With our budget, we are committing to ending veterans' homelessness in New Jersey once and for all. We will invest over \$30 million over the next two years to ensure every veteran has a safe, dignified place to call home.

And for veterans struggling with the disease of addiction, as well as every New Jerseyan struggling to find their path to recovery, our budget will also invest tens of millions of dollars into combating the opioid crisis.

We are already making progress in saving lives from opioid use disorder. Last year, we saw far fewer of our neighbors die from a suspected drug overdose than the year before.

But let me be clear: any precious life lost to the disease of addiction is one too many.

So we must do more.

We need to end the failed War on Drugs that continues to punish people struggling with addiction rather than rehabilitating them.

And that same logic applies to our entire criminal justice system. If you want to restore people's trust in our system of justice, you need to start by reforming it.

And that is exactly what we are doing in New Jersey – by fostering partnerships among members of law

enforcement, leaders in the faith-based community, community-based violence intervention advocates, and mental health professionals.

These partnerships are saving lives — especially Black and Latino lives. Last year, in fact, New Jersey saw its lowest number of shootings in nearly 15 years.

And to help save even more lives, our budget will nearly double funding for the revolutionary ARRIVE Together Program, which pairs police officers with mental health professionals.

This program — which is up and running in all 21 counties — has been a phenomenal success. And with our budget, we will expand it even further.

Here today is one of our leaders with the ARRIVE Together program, Dr. Saba Daneshyar, a mental health professional at Clara Maass Medical Center in Essex County.

With the help of Dr. Daneshyar, we are living up to our responsibility to restore trust in our justice system.

And with our budget, we will also live up to our responsibility to continue confronting one of the largest threats to our state and to our planet: climate change.

As we saw with recent storms in places like Paterson, Little Falls, and Lodi, the threat of climate change is growing more dire by the day.

And with our budget, we will continue leading the way in combating climate change.

Last month, as an example of our leadership, we announced two of the largest offshore wind projects ever in America.

They are going to be built 40 miles off the coast of Atlantic City — and create over 4,000 good-paying, overwhelmingly union jobs.

And once those wind turbines are complete, they will generate enough energy to power nearly two million homes.

So New Jersey is racing toward our goal — one of the most ambitious goals in America — to run on 100% clean energy by 2035.

And to ensure we meet this goal, our budget will also invest \$40 million into modernizing our state's energy grid — an investment we plan to double through federal match funding.

That means we are going to put thousands of electricians, engineers, construction workers — and more — to work, so they can build the literal foundation for New Jersey's clean energy future.

A future hand built by the finest union workers in America.

One of those workers is with us today, Jayson Maksymovich. He is a member of IBEW Local 269, where he trains more than 175 apprentices to serve our state as electricians.

Thank you, Jayson!

New Jersey's clean energy leadership is a perfect example of how we are reclaiming our title as the world's home for innovation.

And with our budget, we will retain that title — with new investments in the realms of fintech, filmmaking, the life sciences, and generative Artificial Intelligence.

Last month, in my State of the State Address, I announced the launch of New Jersey's AI Moonshot.

The goal is for our government to be a catalyst to bring together our top minds to unleash game-changing, AI-powered innovations.

Innovations that create jobs instead of killing them. That help unite our world – by expanding access to health care or education – rather than divide it.

And with our budget, New Jersey's AI Moonshot will be lifting off with new investments to cement our state's status as the home-base for research and development in generative AI.

We will invest in new education and career development programs so students from Cresskill to Cape May can play their part in pioneering the future.

We will also create a \$4.5 million AI innovation challenge to share our state's resources with innovators eager to harness generative AI so they can change the lives of billions for the better.

This is New Jersey's strategy for shaping generative AI responsibly.

And, on the topic of leading responsibly, you may have noticed there is one thing I have yet to mention today.

One thing that is absolutely fundamental to our state's future.

New Jersey Transit.

As our friends in the press are fond of reminding me, I have said many times that I would fix NJ TRANSIT even if it killed me.

Well, I've still got a pulse.

And better yet, I have a new proposal to support NJ TRANSIT for years to come.

But first – let us recall where we began.

Because much like restoring funding for public education, fixing NJ TRANSIT is a marathon, not a sprint.

When we took office, NJ TRANSIT was in deep crisis.

We had a debilitating shortage of engineers, conductors, and bus operators.

Riders and commuters were being stranded – due to chronic delays and last-minute cancellations.

And worst of all: back then, NJ TRANSIT was – literally – at risk of being thrown off the rails.

Our leaders were eight years behind in installing a rail safety system that prevents crashes and collisions. In fact, when we came in, only 12 percent of the job had been completed over eight years.

That gave us about one year to finish the remaining 88 percent, or else NJ TRANSIT was at risk of being shut out of Penn Station – and thrown off the Northeast Corridor.

In other words, NJ TRANSIT was at rock bottom.

So, what did we do?

We turned things around.

Under the leadership of my Chief of Staff, and the former Commissioner of Transportation, Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, and the President and CEO of NJ TRANSIT, Kevin Corbett, we solved each one of NJ TRANSIT's operational challenges.

We completed the installation of that rail safety system – on time.

We fully replenished our ranks of engineers, conductors, and bus operators.

We supercharged NJ TRANSIT's Capital Program – making it the second largest of any transit system in America.

And during the pandemic, when other transit systems were cutting service, we expanded service.

On nearly every major metric – reliability, on-time performance, customer satisfaction, safety – NJ TRANSIT is in far better shape today than it was six years ago.

A big thanks, as well, to the hardworking union men and women who power NJ TRANSIT every day.

Now, I do not say all of this to pat ourselves on the back. Far from it.

Because pulling NJ TRANSIT out of a crisis – well, that is just doing our job.

Our promise was to fix NJ TRANSIT so it can become the world-class transportation system we need it to be.

And with our budget, we are going to build on our progress in fixing NJ TRANSIT in a way that is consistent with our vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey.

Today, we are proposing a Corporate Transit Fee.

It will provide a dedicated funding stream for NJ TRANSIT – at no additional cost to our working families.

With the Corporate Transit Fee, we are going to ask the biggest corporations – with net incomes greater than \$10 million – to support NJ TRANSIT's future.

And we will raise this revenue without placing any new burdens on small- and medium-sized businesses. In fact, nearly 2,500 companies will see their taxes decrease from last year.

And let me take this opportunity to thank, in advance, the big companies which will be stepping up.

Many of them have partnered with our Administration since day one – and they have been essential in getting our economy back on its feet post-pandemic.

But most importantly, let me also thank the hardworking commuters of New Jersey – who have always paid their fair share, and depend on our transit system every day.

It is for them, first and foremost, we are fixing NJ TRANSIT.

Up to this point, our first priority has been solving NJ TRANSIT's operational challenges.

Today, thanks to the progress we have made together, it is time to address our next priority: solving NJ TRANSIT's fiscal challenges.

And with this proposal, we will do just that.

And to shore up NJ TRANSIT's budget even further, we are working with Kevin and his team to meaningfully lower administrative costs while continuing to improve service.

Because unlike some states that demand that their neighbors solve their transit troubles, we are solving our challenges on our own.

We are building a public transit system that is faster, more equitable, and more reliable.

A public transit system that is ready for the biggest sporting event in human history: the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Two years from now, the whole world will have its eyes on New Jersey – particularly for that one glorious day, the FIFA World Cup Final Match on July 19, 2026.

In the weeks since FIFA announced that New Jersey will be hosting the Final and seven other matches – and in turn, pull in more than \$2 billion in economic activity and create 14,000 new, union jobs – many folks have asked me: why was New Jersey chosen?

Of course, there are the obvious answers.

We have the most coveted location on the planet.

The most talented workers you could ask for.

And one of the best transportation systems in the nation.

But great as those things are – there is more to the story.

New Jersey was chosen for the World Cup Final not only because of what we have – but because of who we are.

We were chosen because of our values. Our inclusivity. Our diversity throughout the entire region.

New Jersey – along with our partners in New York City – was chosen because of our unflagging belief in fairness and freedom for everyone. No matter who you are, how you identify, where you came from, or who you pray to.

We were chosen because, here in New Jersey, we do not build walls – we open doors.

We open doors to every child – whether they live in Paterson or Parsippany – so they can chase their wildest dreams.

We open doors to every family – whether they live on a farm in Salem County that has been in the family for generations, or they recently moved to Edison from the other side of the world.

We open our doors to anyone who is willing to step up and contribute to our shared future.

And together, we are going to continue building that stronger and fairer New Jersey where every family – especially those who worry they have been forgotten – has a fair shot at a brighter future.

My friends, we have crafted this year's budget – letter by letter, line by line – to support the working families who have led New Jersey through hard times.

Our promise has always been putting the needs of our families ahead of special interests.

And we are keeping that promise.

With our budget, we will make life more affordable for more families.

We will continue meeting our sacred obligations – from fully funding our public schools, to fixing NJ TRANSIT once and for all.

We will create a new generation of economic opportunities in the industries of the future.

We will maintain fiscal responsibility, while staying true to our values – so New Jersey is prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

We will invest in the potential of every New Jerseyan – from our students to our senior citizens.

We will put more nurses in our hospitals, and more educators in our classrooms.

And we will hand our kids a state that is better than we found it.

We will hand them a New Jersey that is the best place anywhere to raise a family.

A New Jersey that is stronger and fairer than ever before.

Thank you all so very much. May God bless you and your families. And may God continue to bless the great State of New Jersey and the United States of America.

Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](#)

Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about\)](#)

[Lt. Governor Tahesha Way \(/governor/admin/lt\)](#)

[In memoriam of Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt-sheila-y-oliver\)](#)

[Senior Staff \(/governor/admin/staff\)](#)

[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet\)](#)

[Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy \(/governor/climateaction/\)](#)

[Office of Equity \(/governor/admin/equity/\)](#)

[Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency](#)

[\(/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml\)](#)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca\)](#)

[New Jersey Puerto Rico Commission \(https://www.nj.gov/puertoricocommission/\)](#)

[Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](#)

[Governor's Fellows Program \(/governor/admin/fellows\)](#)

[Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](#)

Key Initiatives

[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](#)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](#)

[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](#)

[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](#)

[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](#)

[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](#)

News & Events

[Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562024/approved/news_archive.shtml\)](#)

[Photos \(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy\)](https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy)

[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/news/addresses)

[Executive Orders \(/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html\)](/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

[Administrative Orders \(/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/appointments)

[Advice and Consent Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/acappointments)

[Statements on Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press\)](/governor/news/press)

Social

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/\)](https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)

[Twitter \(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy\)](https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)

[Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/\)](https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)

[Snapchat \(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy\)](https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

[YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice\)](https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)

Contact Us

[Scheduling Requests \(/governor/contact/scheduling/\)](/governor/contact/scheduling/)

[Contact Us \(/governor/contact/all/\)](/governor/contact/all/)

Statewide

[NJ Home \(//www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)

[Services A to Z \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)

[Departments/Agencies \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)

[FAQs \(//www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](http://www.nj.gov/faqs/)

[Contact Us \(//www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)

[Privacy Notice \(//www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)

[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(//www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)

[Accessibility Statement \(//www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)

(//nj.gov/opra/)

(https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login)

(https://tech.nj.gov/)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2024
Office of Governor PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000