

Governor Carney Signs Fiscal Year 2019 Budget and Supplemental Appropriation

Cements \$4.2 billion state budget with \$49 million supplemental appropriation for one-time bonuses

DOVER, Del. – On Thursday, Governor John Carney signed **Senate Bill 235** – the Fiscal Year 2019 Appropriation Act. This budget, which received final passage by the General Assembly this week, provides a balanced \$4.2 billion financial plan that makes investments in Delaware’s economy, workforce and public schools.

The supplemental budget, **Senate Bill 236**, passed today in the Delaware House, appropriates funds to provide a \$500 one-time salary supplement to full-time and part-time employees, as well as supplements to pensioners and one-time funded priority projects.

*“When we presented our budget proposal in January, we were focused on making responsible decisions, using one-time revenue for one-time investments, and helping keep our state competitive. The budget I signed today accomplishes those goals,” said **Governor Carney**. “This is a responsible budget that will invest in our highest-needs schools, and help us recruit and retain teachers where they’re needed most. We are making new investments to confront the opioid crisis, and giving state employees a well-deserved raise. I want to thank members of the Joint Finance Committee and the entire General Assembly for their efficient work on this budget, and for making responsible decisions that will help us continue to address our long-term, structural challenges.”*

“This year’s budget process was unlike any other in my 42 years in government and should serve as an example for subsequent General Assemblies,” said **Harris McDowell, co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee**. “The surplus has been headline news since late last year – and rightly so – but this year was also defined by a spirit of cooperation and an attention to detail that should make all Delawareans proud. Thanks to the diligent work of the Joint Finance Committee, we completed this budget in record time and passed a final version that faithfully mirrors the priorities and values of this state. It is responsible, sensible, and fair and I want to once again thank my colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee, co-chair Melanie George Smith, and all of our elected officials that worked so hard to get us across the finish line today.”

“My colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee worked hard in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that we used the taxpayers’ dollars in a fiscally responsible way,” said **Representative Melanie George Smith, co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee**. “We have been able to meet our core obligations and provide vital services that Delawareans rely on, while restoring funding we were forced to cut in more difficult years and putting funds in reserve for future years. This spending plan is a testament to responsible budgeting.”

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Highlights of the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget:

RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

- Limits operating budget growth to **3.99%**
- Sets aside over \$46 million **by only appropriating 97% of available revenue**
- Funds **long-term liabilities** such as pensions and debt service
- Funds “door openers” such as:
 - \$20.9 million for **school enrollment growth**
 - \$8.8 million for **quality child care** for more children
 - \$3.0 million to **ensure fair elections**
- Generates over **\$5 million in savings** in areas such as energy, fleet services and restructuring of the Department of Education

BETTER SCHOOLS FOR ALL DELAWARE CHILDREN

Investing in Educators

- \$10.2 million for annual salary step, plus a **2% general salary increase** for educators statewide

Investing in Early Education

- \$3.8 million to **fund growth in Delaware’s early learning centers** through the STARS program

Investing in High-Needs Schools

- \$6.0 million to expand the **Opportunity Grants program**, with targeted investments into schools with high percentages of students at the poverty level and/or English Language Learners (ELL) students

Investing in the City of Wilmington

- \$1.5 million for the Christina School District schools located in the City of Wilmington

INVESTING IN OUR WORKFORCE

Investing in State Workers and Educators:

- \$1,000 annual raise for state workers
- 2% raise for teachers statewide, on top of annual step increases
- **\$500 one-time bonus for all state employees**
- **\$400 one-time supplement for all retirees**

High Needs Area – Public Safety:

- Funding for second year of correctional officer raises to \$43,000 starting salary
- \$3.6 million for implementation of correctional officer career ladder

- \$2.3 million to fund implementation of the Department of Correction Independent Review recommendations
- **Establishment of a dedicated Special Operations Response Team (SORT) unit in the Department of Safety and Homeland Security.**

High Needs Area – Children’s Services:

- \$4.2 million to add 30 new casework staff and **contractual support** in the Division of Family Services to bolster child welfare, abuse and neglect hotline investigations
- \$2.0 million to add 29 new staff members in the Division of Youth Rehabilitative services to **meet staffing needs** in six secure facilities, and reduce mandatory overtime

A HEALTHIER DELAWARE

Investments toward improving Delawareans’ health:

- \$1.4 million to expand substance abuse treatment
- \$3 million to implement recommendations of the Behavioral Health Consortium Report
- **\$4.6 million for contractual increases for provider partners providing services to those with disabilities**
- \$285,000 to expand resources for substance-exposed infants
- \$2.0 million in prescription assistance for Delaware seniors and **\$850,000 to support Senior Nutrition Services**