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THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot so well do for themselves in their separate and individual capacities. In all that the people can do individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere.

Abraham Lincoln

In The News-New York State

New York Releases Advanced Nuclear Development Roadmap

Governor Kathy Hochul this week announced the completion of the Master Plan for Responsible Advanced Nuclear Development in New York (Advanced Nuclear Master Plan). The Master Plan is a comprehensive statewide "roadmap" to achieve the Governor's goal to create five gigawatts (GW) of new nuclear power.

Co-authored by the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the New York State Department of Public Service (DPS), the master plan outlines coordinated state actions to support the "safe and timely" development and deployment of advanced nuclear power plants in upstate New York.

"Expanding emission-free, round-the-clock nuclear power is a cornerstone of my all-of-the-above approach to ensure we have enough energy to keep the lights on and costs down for New Yorkers," Governor Hochul said.

DPS also issued a White Paper with policy recommendations to help enable the commercial viability of advanced nuclear development, potential cost reductions, and other considerations for advancing the Governor's Nuclear Reliability Backbone.

In addition, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) also continues to move forward to develop and construct at least one gigawatt of nuclear energy in Upstate New York.

The 30-point Master Plan identifies several areas of focus to support responsible advanced nuclear development, including:

- **Advance a policy framework to support deployment:** Enable State actions on cost reductions and project commercial viability.
- **Capitalize on investments:** Build on federal investments and opportunities such as Project Janus at Fort Drum.

- **Maximize New York's nuclear supply chain opportunities:** Establish a nuclear supplier readiness program, connect New York businesses with nuclear project opportunities, and develop a coordinated, longer-term state supply chain strategy.

- **Build the workforce for nuclear energy – starting with existing skills and resources:** Leverage existing workforce funding and programs, upskill experienced workers, and support transitions from adjacent sectors while aligning specialized training investments with deployment.

- **Identify potential sites and partner with communities to prepare for development:** Establish a process to identify interested host communities, evaluate suitable sites, including brownfields, and support early site characterization and evaluation.

- **Adapt state regulatory processes while maintaining uncompromising safety:** Review State regulatory processes, identify opportunities to better align requirements, and equip local governments with tools to prepare for potential development.

NYSERDA will host a public webinar on January 13, 2027 at 12 p.m. ET to provide an overview of the Advanced Nuclear Master Plan.

"New York has the talent, manufacturing expertise and research institutions to become a national hub for the advanced nuclear industry," Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Hope Knight said. "Under Governor Hochul's leadership, we are laying the groundwork to connect New York businesses with new opportunities, strengthen our domestic supply chain and attract investment that will create good-paying jobs across the state. This Master Plan provides a clear path to ensure New York companies and workers are well-positioned to benefit as this emerging industry grows."

Bills Delivered to the Governor

A1396 AM Eachus/Senator Ryan: Prevents an agency, department, division, commission, bureau or any other entity under the authority of the executive department from contracting, subcontracting or hiring any third party during a hiring freeze.

A1422 AM Cruz/Senator Bailey: Provides that an accusatory instrument or supporting deposition consisting of factual allegations by a deponent with limited English proficiency is not sufficient unless accompanied by a sworn statement from an interpreter affirming the accuracy of the English interpretation.

A2330 AM McDonald/Senator Skoufis: Requires electronic filing of all lobbying filings with the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government.

A2633 AM Lunsford/Senator Jackson: Directs the president of the State Civil Service Commission to conduct a study on job vacancies across state agencies and determine which, if any, state agencies are understaffed.

S 896A Senator Martinez/AM Hyndman: Requires the inclusion of local and municipal animal shelters, any duly incorporated society for the prevention of cruelty to animals and veterinary services when establishing local comprehensive emergency management plans; requires that information to the public include the communication accommodation needs of persons with vision or hearing impairments and information on which temporary housing and other necessary facilities are designated as animal-friendly.

S1239F Senator Kavanagh/AM Kelles: Enacts the "food safety and chemical disclosure act"; prohibits certain food additives and food color additives; provides that in an action to enforce compliance, the recognition by the federal food and drug administration of any of these substances as safe may not be alleged as a defense; establishes requirements for the reporting of GRAS (generally recognized as safe) substances.

S7279 Senator Scarcella-Spanton/AM Berger: Authorizes certified school psychologists to participate in the certification of certain persons as intellectually disabled or developmentally disabled

S8870 Senator Skoufis/AM Braunstein: Increases the total number of consecutive years as a licensed real estate salesperson prior to becoming a licensed real estate broker from two years to four years.

In The News-New York City

Mayor's Signature Triggers Horse Carriage Ban Lawsuit

NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani signed a bill banning horse-drawn carriage rides and horses from Central Park and the rest of New York City – but minutes later, TWU filed a lawsuit to block it.

The Transport Workers Union of America (TWU) and TWU Local 100 filed a class-action lawsuit in Manhattan federal court seeking to have the ban declared unconstitutional, arbitrary, and capricious. A horse-carriage medallion owner and two drivers are also named plaintiffs.

The lawsuit says the ban bill, Intro. 943, violates carriage owners and workers' rights enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and the New York State Constitution, and goes against prior court rulings clarifying the lawful limits of the New York City Council's authority.

"This bill is an unconstitutional abomination," TWU International President John Samuelsen said. "It strips horse-carriage owners of the city-issued medallions that they purchased for hundreds of thousands of dollars – without mandating or guaranteeing compensation. It prohibits carriage drivers from selling their horses to carriage-ride operators in another city, or even another state where rides are permitted. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Despite the good intentions of the mayor, the protections he outlined recently should have been written into the legislation."

Citing case law, the lawsuit states that the city cannot ban an entire industry and punish all participants when it has less draconian options – regulation and enforcement against individuals it believes violated the rules.

The suit asserts the City has not only failed to show that regulation has failed, but agency leaders testifying before the City Council described a well-regulated industry that has been following the rules. A Department of Consumer and Worker Protection executive knew of no license being revoked or suspended "in recent years." The Department of Health witness testified that it directed carriage drivers to suspend operations because the weather was too hot or too cold 102 times over three years. "We have not issued violations for violating the suspension," the official testified. No driver or carriage owner has been convicted of animal cruelty, the lawsuit also points out. The NYC carriage horses are the most regulated, most protected in the country, and will have fewer protections under this bill, the lawsuit states.

Intro 943 would prohibit carriage rides as of June 1, 2028. If the City truly believed a public safety emergency existed, it would not let carriage rides continue without any operational changes for another 20 months, the lawsuit states, relying on a recent federal court decision against the Trump Administration, which ruled against using "public safety" as pretext to get what it wanted.

It points out that e-bike crashes between 2019 and May 2026 injured 17,434 people and killed 113, "but there is no legislation banning e-bikes, nor is there any registration or licensing requirement, like there is for horse-drawn carriages."

The City Council passed the ban bill following the June 17, 2026, death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan, who was killed after a carriage-horse bolted. "His death was a grievous loss, and nothing in this Complaint minimizes it. But his family, in notices of claim filed by its counsel, Ali Najmi, Chair of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, attributes the bolting to stray voltage on City infrastructure — a hazard the Local Law does not touch," the lawsuit states.

The City and Central Park Conservancy, meanwhile, ignored years of requests by the union and workers for hitching posts to tether horses "which could have prevented the Romanch tragedy," the lawsuit states. The fatal accident is believed to be the first since carriage rides became a feature of Central Park, which opened in 1858.

The plaintiffs' lawyers who filed the lawsuit are Arthur Schwartz and former New York City Council Member Benjamin Kallos.

Prior to signing the legislation, Mayor Mamdani announced a framework to support a workforce transition for horse-drawn carriage drivers and stable hands "as New York City prepares to sunset the horse-drawn carriage industry."

The framework outlined financial assistance for medallion owners and new workforce development opportunities for drivers and stable hands, including career training, educational pathways and stipends. A full transition plan will be released by April 2027, in partnership with the City Council and in accordance with the timeline established in the legislation.

City Council Invests $2.1 Million for Nontraditional Worker Organizing and Education

New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin and Council Members announced a $2.1 million investment for a new nontraditional worker initiative, which will support organizing and education efforts among grassroots labor organizations serving contract workers, domestic workers, and other vulnerable workers across the city.

Funding will go towards targeted outreach and the empowerment of nontraditional workers on their legal rights and recently enacted city protections. Through the on-the-ground efforts of partnering organizations, this initiative will ensure nontraditional workers throughout the city know their rights and what to do if those rights are violated.

The $2.1 million investment will be distributed across five partner organizations:

- Urban Justice Center, Street Vendor Project (SVP)
- Third Sector New England, Worker's Justice Project (WJP)
- Consortium for Worker Education (CWE)
- African Communities Together (ACT)
- Laundry Workers Center (LWC)

The Council funding will support workers from a range of labor sectors including street vendors, app-based delivery workers, construction, house cleaning, transportation, food service and restaurant workers, home health aides, laundry workers, and warehouse workers.

The initiative will focus on several key programmatic themes including:

- Know Your Rights education, including structured classes and workshops with workplace and community-based outreach;
- Labor rights clinics on filing complaints;
- Train-the-Trainer programs for worker-leaders to serve as Know Your Rights Ambassadors;
- Advancing delivery workers' capacity to monitor algorithms, identify labor violations, and prevent unjust deactivations;
- Additional programming and education on worker protection laws to help workers identify and document potential workplace violations, understand how to engage appropriate government agencies, and develop the skills necessary to share rights information with coworkers and others in their communities.

"Strong worker protection laws can be the difference between someone earning a fair day's pay and being out on the street," said Speaker Julie Menin.

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Briefs

The Empire State's MWBE Program Records New Highs

New York State set two new records for its Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) program in Fiscal Year 2025–26: nearly $3.86 billion in state spending with certified MWBEs and a nation-leading 33.53 percent MWBE utilization rate, both the highest in the history of the State.

Spending with MWBE firms increased by more than $524 million over the previous fiscal year, and the State exceeded its 30 percent MWBE utilization goal for the sixth consecutive year.

The FY 2025–26 MWBE Annual Report highlights the continued growth of New York State's MWBE program. Of the nearly $3.86 billion in spending with MWBEs, approximately $2.02 billion went to Minority Business Enterprises and $1.84 billion to Women Business Enterprises. MWBEs contributed across a wide range of industries, including construction, professional services, commodities and construction consulting, underscoring their essential role in delivering public projects and services throughout New York State.

New York Opts into Federal Delay of Medicaid Work Requirements

New York will opt into a federal hold harmless period through June 30, 2027, in which Medicaid members will not lose coverage for failing to meet the new Medicaid work requirements that begin January 1, 2027.

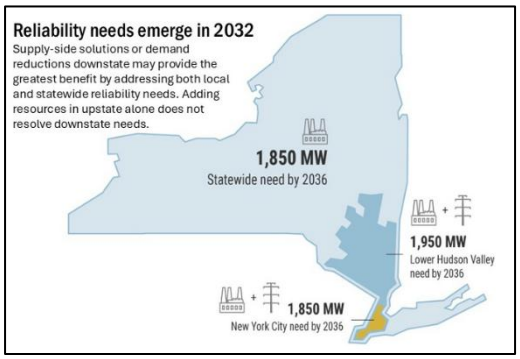
The State's decision to participate in the program will provide additional time to test new systems; educate members, providers, and stakeholders; and refine processes and mitigation strategies to help avoid coverage disruptions when the hold harmless period ends, according to Governor Kathy Hochul.

The Governor has also directed the New York State Department of Health to submit a formal request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) seeking a temporary exemption from the work requirements for all Bronx residents related to economic hardship. If approved, Bronx residents would not have to meet the new requirements while the exemption remains in place. Under H.R.1, Medicaid members are exempt from work and community engagement requirements if they reside in a county with a high unemployment rate. The Bronx is currently the only county in New York that meets that standard, but the State will continue to monitor all county rates and pursue additional exemptions as appropriate.

In addition, the State released the first round of new 5-year contracts for the Navigator program, a key component of the State's overall H.R.1 mitigation strategy to ensure that all Medicaid members have access to free, comprehensive enrollment assistance from people in their communities.

NYISO Warns of Coming Statewide Power Shortfall

New York's power grid operator is warning the State could run short of electricity by 2033, and new transmission lines alone cannot close the gap.



The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) released its 2026 Reliability Needs Assessment. It is the first time the grid operator has found a statewide shortfall. The shortfall grows to about 1,850 megawatts by 2036, estimated at power for nearly 1.5 million households.

Two factors are driving the gap: aging power plants that are retiring or breaking down and new demand from large projects such as data centers and chip factories. About 2,700 megawatts of that new demand is included in the forecast, the majority of which is anticipated upstate. According to NYISO, data centers account for about 1,700 megawatts. Requests for more than 14,000 additional megawatts are waiting in line.

Local shortfalls are projected downstate, in New York City and the Lower Hudson Valley, starting in 2032. NYISO found no upstate reliability shortfall. But because the grid is shared, upstate growth adds to the statewide gap.

Applications Now Open for Federal Education Tax Credit

Governor Kathy Hochul announced the launch of New York's application process under the federal scholarship tax credit program — a program that will drive resources to New York public and private school students without diverting any funds from public schools. The newly launched state portal allows organizations seeking recognition as scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) to apply. Eligible organizations are encouraged to apply by December 31, 2026, to become New York State approved SGOs for the 2027 tax year.

Starting next year, taxpayers will be able to donate up to $1,700 to approved SGOs in New York — $3,400 for married couples filing together — and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit from the federal government.

Approved SGOs can disburse the donated scholarship funds to eligible families, which can be used on a variety of educational expenses. Scholarships can be used for a range of qualified education expenses, including tutoring, special education services, technology, extended-day, and afterschool programs, and tuition. To be approved through this process, an SGO must be a 501(c)(3) public charity and authorized to do business in New York. It must spend at least 90 percent of its income on scholarships and provide scholarships to at least 10 students who do not all attend the same school. New York students are eligible to receive scholarships if their household income in the prior year was no more than 300 percent of the area median gross income.

Mamdani Administration & NYCHA Move to Put 91 Homes in the Hands of Public Housing Residents

New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) CEO Lisa Bova-Hiatt announced a new effort to help public housing residents become homeowners of 91 properties across Queens, the Bronx, and Brooklyn.

NYCHA released a **Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) seeking partners to rehabilitate the properties and facilitate their sale to existing residents**. The initiative marks NYCHA's first use of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 32 program, which creates opportunities for public housing residents to purchase the homes in which they live.

The properties are located primarily in Southeast Queens, with additional homes in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The portfolio includes 75 single-family homes, 11 two-family homes, three three-family homes and two four-family homes. After renovations, eligible residents will have the opportunity to buy their homes.

New York City Adopts Tax Rates for 2026/2027

The New York City Council adopted the rates for property taxes for the period from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

There are different rates for each of four classes of property:

Class	Property Type	Tax Rate
1	Private Homes	19.972%
2	Multi-family	12.423%
3	Utility Company	11.119%
4	Commercial	10.859%

Taxes were billed in June using the rates adopted for the 2025/26 tax year. The NYC Department of Finance will issue revised tax bills that will true up the annual tax for the 2026/27 tax year. Taxes payable in January for Class 2 properties will decrease over the taxes that were due in July. Taxes for the other classes will increase.

Class:	1	2	3	4
Rate for July 2026 bill (prior year's rate)	19.843	12.439%	11.108%	10.848%
Catch up rate for January 2027 bill	20.101%	12.407%	11.130%	10.870%
Revised rate for full 2026/27 tax year	19.972%	12.423%	11.119%	10.859%

New York City Expands Access to Free Immigration Legal Help

New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs' (MOIA) is expanding its hours for the **Immigration Legal Support Hotline.** New Yorkers can now call seven days a week to connect with free, confidential legal help in their preferred language, regardless of immigration status.

MOIA's Immigration Legal Support Hotline can be reached at 1-800-354-0365 or by calling 311 and saying "Immigration Legal." The Hotline's expanded hours are: Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.; and Saturday-Sunday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Coming Up

New York State

Tuesday, November 24th

Public Hearing: Federal Impacts to Public-Private Partnerships for Transmission, Assembly Hearing Room – 250 Broadway – 19th Floor, New York, 10 a.m.

New York City

Tuesday, November 24th

Committee on Disabilities, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10 a.m.

Committee on Parks and Recreation, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10 a.m.

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, Resiliency and Dispositions, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 3, 12 p.m.

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