

## INSIDE

Due to the holiday, there will be no PSLLC Newsletter published next week. We will resume publication on April 22, 2022.

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Gaming: Bob Baffert Suspension in NY

## Gov Touts Conceptual Budget Agreement

On the eve of an expiring budget extender Thursday, Governor Hochul announced a conceptual \$220 billion budget agreement with the legislature (video [here](#)). The extender was enacted by the legislature and the Governor when it became obvious that the March 31 deadline for an agreement was going to be missed, jeopardizing state payrolls and contract payments.

As of early today, four Article VII language bills are in print [Public Protection and General Government](#) (PPGG- S8005C/A9005C), [Health and Mental Hygiene](#) (HMH- S.8007C/A.9007C), [Transportation and Economic Development](#) (TED- S8008C/A9008C), and [Revenue](#) (REV- S.8009C/A.9009C). In her press briefing, the Governor offered a [high-level overview](#) of budget initiatives including \$800 million for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The rest of the package is anticipated to be in print and passed within the next 24 - 48 hours. Some budget highlights include:

**Cannabis Tax Relief:** Part PP of the Revenue bill passed by the legislature on Thursday included an important change for the emerging adult-use cannabis industry, allowing business owners to make ordinary and necessary business deductions that would otherwise have been prohibited under federal law.

**Cocktails To-Go:** The Governor also confirmed that the popular "cocktail to go" option that emerged during the COVID shutdown, would be included in the budget with certain parameters. Reports indicate those will include a requirement that restaurants seal the to-go drinks and pair them with "substantial food."

**Home Care Workers wage increase, bonuses, hospital funding:** In her press briefing, the Governor announced \$7.4 billion would be included for a \$3 per hour increase for home care workers. Also announced was \$1.2 billion for front line worker bonuses, \$2.4 billion for health care infrastructure, and \$3.9 billion in hospital funding.

While the week's news was budget centric, other items of note included the opening of an **Office of Cannabis Management** [web-portal](#) to allow localities to repeal decisions to opt out of hosting dispensaries, and the boys of summer returned as baseball season finally kicked off with opening day on Thursday. See more agency news inside.

### PSLLC Notes:

- This week Park Strategies Partner, Greg Serio, and Vice President, Tom Buchan, are representing the firm's client Finseca, an association of life insurance agents working to provide access to financial security for all, at the 2022 National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Spring Conference in Kansas City. Finseca is seeking, among other priorities, to enhance the availability of life insurance products to consumers.
- Our Park Strategies Team was proud to work with the legislature to secure introduction in both houses of legislation, [A9737 \(Cusick\) / S8693 \(Brooks\)](#) which eliminates unnecessary monetary penalties related to notice violations under the workers' compensation law.



## From the Governor

### Governor Announces Agreement on FY NYS Budget

In addition to the highlights in the opening column, Governor Hochul also touted the following budget highlights:

Tax relief for middle-class New Yorkers and small businesses

Suspending fuel taxes

Billions of dollars to rebuild the health care workforce, support home care workers, and build the health care system of the future

Increasing funding for and access to child care

A record-level investment in a five-year transportation

[Full Announcement here.](#)

### Executive Orders:

There were no new COVID related Executive Orders this week.

## Legislative News

### Legislative Activity

The Legislature is not scheduled to be in session next week. However, in the now unlikely event that budget negotiations do not conclude today or over the weekend, the legislature may return to finish passing budget bills (the *2022 Legislative Calendar* can be accessed [here](#)). With the legislature's focus on budget negotiations, the floor calendars were again somewhat lighter than normal - 44 bills were passed this week.

Of particular note was:

~ [A1514 \(Dinowitz\) / S1345 \(Hoylman\)](#) prohibits an employer from requiring an employee or person seeking employment to accept mandatory arbitration agreements as a condition of employment. This bill passed the Assembly and heads to the Senate for consideration.

### Public Hearings

No public hearings are currently scheduled for either house of the legislature. The public hearing calendar can be accessed [here](#).

## State Agencies

### ***From the New York Office of the Attorney General***

#### **AG Demands NFL Address Gender-Based Discrimination**

NYS AG James [issued a letter](#) calling on the National Football League (NFL) to address recent allegations of workplace inequity. The letter, signed by six attorneys general, pointed to recent reports which indicate that more than 30 former employees have now come forward and described a pervasive culture of sexism and widespread workplace discrimination within the NFL

#### **AG Sues Eviction Lawyers for Taking Advantage of New York Tenants**

NYS AG James [announced a lawsuit](#) against Balsamo, Rosenblatt & Hall, P.C. and its partners alleging they engaged in deceptive rent collection practices and initiating frivolous lawsuits against New York tenants. Following an investigation, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) found that Balsamo, a Brooklyn-based real estate law firm retained largely by landlords, did not conduct any meaningful reviews of their non-payment eviction cases before filing litigation, resulting in the distribution of deceptive rent collection letters, unnecessary legal actions against tenants, and improper evictions without cause.

### ***From the New York Office of the NYS Comptroller***

#### **State Comptroller DiNapoli Statement on State Budget Extender**

With the budget running late this year, the NYS Comptroller had initially issued a statement indicating the late budget could delay the processing of paychecks if the NYS Legislature did not pass a budget extender appropriating funds for the checks to be processed on time. However the Legislature did pass a budget extender on April 4<sup>th</sup>, prompting the NYS Comptroller to [issue a statement](#) assuring more than 60,000 state employees would be paid.

### ***From the New York State Gaming Commission***

#### **Trainer Bob Baffert Banned from New York State Horse Racing through at least July 2**

The NYS Gaming Commission [issued a statement](#) recognizing the reciprocity of a 90- day suspension imposed by the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission on horse trainer Bob Baffert after he was alleged to have given a banned substance to 2021 Kentucky Derby winner Medina Spirit.

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