

News from Senator George M. Borrello

57th Senate District

Representing Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and portions of Livingston County

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SENATOR BORRELLO HAILS PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION PROTECTING SMALL BUSINESSES FROM COVID-RELATED UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SPIKES

ALBANY – After nearly 10 months of advocacy for such a measure, Senator George Borrello hailed the passage of Senate [legislation](#) today that would help protect struggling small businesses from being penalized with higher unemployment insurance premiums as a result of layoffs they incurred due to the pandemic.

Senator Borrello advanced a version of the measure as part of a [package](#) of small business relief legislation and also co-sponsored a standalone version of the [bill](#) with Senator Pam Helming. On October 14, he spoke at a Senate hearing on helping small businesses where he noted that the impending increase in unemployment premiums would likely result in an unprecedented doubling of premiums in a state where rates are already among the highest in the nation.

He commented on today’s passage of the bill:

“When it comes to standing up for small businesses in New York State, I will never back down or be silent.

“That is why I was one of the earliest and strongest voices, advocating for the state to protect our small businesses from the devastating and unprecedented increases in unemployment insurance premiums that would hit them in 2021, unless we passed legislation to exempt COVID-related layoffs.

“The current unemployment insurance system wasn’t designed to adjust for a government-mandated mass economic lockdown like the one we’ve experienced this year. To shield our small employers from an astronomical increase in their rates that was no fault of their own, I’ve been fighting for legislation - since March of last year - that would ‘hold harmless’ small businesses facing this situation.

“Today, that advocacy culminated with Senate passage of a measure that will provide that protection. It is an important victory and a great step forward, but just one of many that lie ahead. Our small businesses are the key to our recovery and making them whole again is our responsibility as lawmakers. I urge the Assembly and the Governor to act quickly to enact this measure into law.”

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