



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Calls for Travel Ban as Part of Comprehensive Response to Ebola

CATHARINE YOUNG October 20, 2014

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Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C-Olean) is calling on President Obama to enact an immediate travel ban on passengers flying from West Africa to the United States to contain the spread of Ebola.

“Common sense dictates that we should stop travel into the United States from Ebola-affected West African nations. Thomas Eric Duncan, the Ebola victim who passed away in Dallas, travelled to the U.S. on a commercial flight from Liberia and now the virus has infected others. Protecting lives should be our first priority. Because JFK Airport is a major international travel hub that travelers from around the world pass through, we must be especially vigilant in New York State,” said Senator Young.

“People are understandably anxious about the threat of Ebola and wondering if their government is responding quickly and effectively to keep us safe. It is critically important that our federal and state governments are working together and doing everything possible to allay those fears. Halting travel from Ebola-stricken nations must be part of this response.

“Our healthcare facilities are among the best in the world, and we must make sure they are leading the way in being ready for any cases of Ebola here. The Department of Health (DOH) needs to establish a full and comprehensive response plan as soon as possible that ensures our hospitals, healthcare professionals, and first responders are all working together and have the resources they need.

“With Senate Health Committee Chairman Kemp Hannon and my other Senate colleagues, I join in calling on state health, emergency services, and homeland security officials to immediately develop a comprehensive plan. We must ensure our healthcare and transportation systems are ready and equipped to respond to this threat. The state also should make sure any additional training and other necessary measures related to Ebola do not impose costs on hospitals, first responders, or local governments,” said Senator Young.

In the DOH’s readiness plan, Senator Young is calling for the following issues to be clearly and affectively addressed: patient identification, isolation, and staff allocation; personal protective equipment; clinical management; environmental cleaning and waste management; burial; laboratory requirements; and other protocols and precautions, especially for front line staff providing care. The assessment should be transparent and identify strengths and weaknesses within the infrastructure and make recommendations for improvements.

A roundtable discussion recently was held in New York City with state officials, medical experts, and officials from other impacted sectors to determine what must be done to ensure New York is ready to handle cases of Ebola. The Senate will work closely with state healthcare and transportation officials to make sure a plan is in place to protect New Yorkers.

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