



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Why are People Leaving New York State?

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO January 30, 2020



Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I,REF-Glenville) and Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara (D-Rotterdam) today announced a new bi-partisan effort they are leading to examine the New York State population loss according to federal estimates.

The latest [data recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau](#) showed New York with an estimated population of 19.5 million people as of July 1, 2019, making it the fourth largest state in the country, but also showed that New York's population dropped 76,790 over the previous year. New York's yearly loss ranked fourth in the US just behind West Virginia, this

is compared to an increase in the US population of 1.6 million from 2018.

Although the numbers are up an estimated 75,000 over the last Census, the loss was the fourth straight year for New York's population. "It means New York lost more people than any other state in the nation for the second year in a row in 2019, according to the new federal estimates," Santabarbara said.

Since 2010, New York lost a net total of about 1.4 million residents to other states, more than any other state in the country, according to the [analysis by the Empire Center](#). The 2019 report found that the largest share of people that left New York State are middle class workers and high income earners. According to United Van Lines, those who left New York earned more than \$150,000 and only 8.4 percent earned less than \$50,000. New York is also facing a skills gap where 42 percent (5.65 million) of New Yorkers have a high school diploma or less and are being left out of the technology and clean energy jobs that the state has made a push to attract.

In response to these alarming numbers, Senator Tedisco and Assemblyman Santabarbara, who both represent areas of upstate New York, are teaming up to find out some of the reasons why this is happening.

"Let's reach out to New Yorkers to find out what's happening," said Assemblyman Santabarbara, who is the Assembly Chair of the Commission on Rural Resources. "More than 80 percent of New York State is made up of rural communities with around 3.3 million residents in 44 rural counties, according to the U.S. Census Bureau," Santabarbara said. "If this continues we could face the possibility of losing a seat in the 2022 redistricting, reducing our representation in Washington DC. New York State must address the needs, interests, and concerns of these communities if we are serious about stopping the population decline."

“The elephant in the room that our state government’s not talking about is why New York State is number one for highest population loss in the nation? ‘I love New York!’ is New York’s slogan. Unfortunately, in New York State and in our Upstate communities, too many people are saying ‘I’m leaving New York!’ When enough people who can afford to leave New York State are gone, who will be left to pay for the infrastructure, health care, schools and other necessities?” said Senator Jim Tedisco. “This is a bi-partisan effort to shine the light on this problem that’s causing people to leave our Upstate communities and to find out why the Empire State is fast becoming the ‘Empty State’ so we can change the agenda to keep them here.”

For the data collection phase of the initiative, Senator Tedisco and Assemblyman Santabarbara will launch an online questionnaire on the issue that will be targeted to the upstate areas they represent, but will be open for all New Yorkers to respond.

Following the data collection phase of the Tedisco-Santabarbara initiative, a series of roundtable discussions will be launched on the issue (date and location TBD) to listen to representatives from small businesses, manufacturing, technology, workforce development, health care, education and economic growth and development to find long-term solutions aimed at addressing the issues affecting population loss and attracting people and talent to the rural areas of Upstate New York.

“This bipartisan initiative can provide valuable information about the issues facing our upstate families and identify the significant factors that can lead to population decline.” Assemblyman Santabarbara added. “From here we can assess the impact of existing laws and regulations on the unique needs of upstate in areas like agriculture, energy needs and opportunities, healthcare, economic development, the environment, education, and mandate and tax relief,” Santabarbara said. “The goal is to support policy and promote efforts that can enhance and protect our upstate communities.”