



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, Senate Republican colleagues urge Governor to exempt corrections officers, other frontline state employees from wage hike freeze: 'We hope you will agree that New York needs to put actions of support behind our words of support.'

THOMAS F. O'MARA April 13, 2020

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Thank you for your ongoing leadership in recognizing the essential workers on the front lines throughout our communities who, day in and day out, night after night, are providing truly courageous, heroic, inspiring, selfless, and life-saving service. Their commitment to our common good has been remarkable. The very fact that those workers unable to work remotely are risking their personal health and safety to protect the health and safety of New Yorkers at large deserves

and demands our recognition and, more importantly, support.

Albany, N.Y., April 13—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and other members of the Senate Republican Conference today sent a letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo urging the governor to immediately move forward with a scheduled salary increase for corrections officers and other state employees that New York has designated “essential” to the COVID-19 response.

The governor recently froze a scheduled two-percent salary increase for a large segment of the state workforce including many workers on the front lines that the state has designated “essential,” including state corrections officers and other law enforcement officers, nurses and other staff at public hospitals, and direct caregivers in nursing homes and mental health care facilities, among others.

O'Mara and his Senate GOP colleagues believe that these frontline workers should be exempt from the governor's freeze.

In their letter to Cuomo, Senate Republicans wrote, “Thank you for your ongoing leadership in recognizing the essential workers on the front lines throughout our communities who, day in and day out, night after night, are providing truly courageous, heroic, inspiring, selfless, and life-saving service. Their commitment to our common good has been remarkable. The very fact that those workers unable to work remotely are risking their personal health and safety to protect the health and safety of New Yorkers at large deserves and demands our recognition and, more importantly, support.

“Recognizing this service in these unprecedented times, then, we appreciate this opportunity to urge you to immediately provide an exemption for essential workers unable to work from home, and unable to take adequate social distancing precautions on the job, from your freeze of their scheduled two-percent salary increase. These include corrections officers, law

enforcement officers, nurses and other public hospital staff, and direct caregivers in nursing and group homes, and mental health care facilities.

“Of course this list doesn’t cover everyone on the front lines, but we know who they are. It’s the least we can do to show our respect for and admiration of their personal sacrifices... In short, we hope you will agree that New York needs to put actions of support behind our words of support for the state’s essential workforce working daily on our behalf.”

[see attached copy of today's letter above]

In addition to O’Mara, the following Senate Republicans signed the letter: George Amedore, George Borello, Phil Boyle, Rich Funke, Patrick Gallivan, Joseph Griffo, Pamela Helming, Chris Jacobs, Daphne Jordan, Andrew Lanza, Betty Little, Robert Ortt, Patty Ritchie, Sue Serino, James Seward, and James Tedisco.