



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

Senator Borrello and Assemblyman Goodell Advance Plan to Restart New York's Economy

GEORGE M. BORRELLO April 16, 2020

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ALBANY, NY – With the COVID-19 crisis spiking unemployment in the state, shuttering thousands of businesses and driving up government budget deficits, Senator George Borrello and Assemblyman Andy Goodell advanced a plan for a phased-in reopening of New York's economy. The strategy hinges on application of a regionally based assessment model that would determine risk level based on a variety of factors including population density, infection rate and health care capacity. The strategy would also incorporate risk analysis by

industry.

The geographical template for the plan would be the state's existing ten Regional Economic Development Council zones (REDC). Each zone would be evaluated based on a multi-tiered risk assessment that could include factors such as infection level, hospitalization utilization, demographic and trend data, such as the increase or decrease in number of active cases. Risk analysis by business sector would also be conducted, based on the four-level model developed by OSHA, with corresponding guidelines for protecting workers safety.

"Almost like a horror film, the COVID-19 pandemic invaded our world seemingly overnight, and in so doing, changed life as we know it. While our battle with this insidious virus isn't over, the strength and unity of New Yorkers in meeting this challenge has been extraordinary, helping us 'flatten the curve' and ease infection rates in many of our hardest hit downstate areas," said Senator George Borrello.

"However, an economic crisis has been unfolding alongside our public health emergency. The shuttering of our businesses has resulted in staggering job losses – 1.2 million residents filed for unemployment over the past five weeks, four times the total number of jobs lost during the Great Recession of 2008."

"While New York is one state, we cannot ignore the reality that there is a huge gap between infection rates in New York City and its surrounding counties and rural areas of upstate. For example, in Chautauqua County we currently have four active cases and a substantial drop in the number of people in precautionary quarantine. That is just one example, but it is illustrative of the experience of many rural areas," said Borrello. "Under the plan we are advancing, economies in regions like this could be safely restarted by following safety protocols, putting people back to work and saving many small businesses from having to close their doors forever."

“Each day that passes puts us in further economic jeopardy. While the governor’s statewide edicts have been done out of an abundance of caution, we cannot restart our economy with the same ‘one-size-fits-all’ process,” said Assemblyman Andy Goodell. “The impact of this pandemic on the various regions of our state has been vastly different and a common-sense plan needs to be tailored to fit the level of risk.”

Senator Borrello and Assemblyman Goodell have submitted their plan to New York State Commissioner of Tax and Finance, Michael Schmidt, who will be part of the Cuomo administration’s team working on restarting the economy.

The legislators’ plan and letter to Commissioner Schmidt are attached.