



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

Senator Robach Calls for Regional Reopening Timeline

JOSEPH E. ROBACH April 22, 2020



Senator Joe Robach joined with members of the New York State Senate Republican Conference to call on Governor Cuomo -- who finally heard their calls to begin a responsible, regional re-opening of New York -- to provide data within a week on which of the state's economic regions meet the CDC's Phase 1 standards to restart business.

These assessments must be released to the public so that parts of the state can begin to recover from the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic in a safe way.

Governor Cuomo must include the state Department of Health, local departments of Health,

local officials, local businesses, and industry leaders in this process.

While the Governor allows the experts to work on the data, he must also take on the state's broken unemployment system. Over 1.2 million New Yorkers filed for unemployment as of April 16 and despite the voluntary efforts of state workers to handle the unprecedented volume of calls, unemployed New Yorkers cannot get through to the agency, have not received call-backs, and have not received needed checks.

"New Yorkers have made tremendous sacrifices to protect the health of others, and we applaud every doctor, nurse, health care worker, law enforcement officer, EMT, grocer, trucker, farmer, and all frontline workers who have kept us going through this pandemic. While every region of this state shared in the same economic and emotional sacrifice, every region of this state luckily hasn't experienced the same health crisis. It is time to bring people hope and prosperity under the science-based guidelines set forth by the CDC and restart parts of the economy in a smart way. We expect Governor Cuomo will be responsive to this call to deliver the data to see which of our regions meet the CDC guidelines to begin Phase 1," said Republican Leader John J. Flanagan.

"Our offices are also dealing with an extraordinary volume of calls from hopeless New Yorkers, laid off, staying at home to protect others, but who need to put food on the table today. Although it is reassuring that all individuals will be paid back to the date of their unemployment, our constituents cannot continue to pay their bills without receiving their benefits now. We appreciate state workers who volunteered to make calls seven days a week, but it is not enough to deal with the volume of New Yorkers who need immediate assistance and the Governor must address this issue," Leader Flanagan added.

Senator Robach said "A regional approach can be put into to place to balance both public health and economic challenges of various communities. Relaunching our economy based

on science and safety is the right thing to do for businesses in our state, and we hope the Governor heeds our call to unveil the data next week. We can and should follow the CDC guidelines, listen to the voices of local health departments, and local businesses to get the economy started safely. It's also necessary for the Governor to fix unemployment. People laid off due to forced shutdowns cannot wait any longer to receive assistance.”

The impact of the coronavirus has varied widely across the state. Only 7% of statewide coronavirus hospitalizations are within areas outside of New York City and its suburbs. The Governor's regional assessments should consider cities separately from less dense populations within economic regions.