



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Helming, Local Leaders And Sportsmen Call For Reopening Of Sportsmen's Clubs

PAMELA HELMING May 4, 2020

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New York State Senator Pam Helming today joined local leaders to call for the reopening of area sportsmen's clubs. Recently, Governor Cuomo authorized the reopening of marinas and golf courses. However, other recreational opportunities that can be done with social distancing, such as clubs that offer target, skeet, trap and sporting clays shooting have not been reopened. Many of the opportunities these clubs provide can be done with even greater social distancing than golf or boating.

“This is a common sense issue. Everyone, including our local sportsmen's clubs are putting public health first. Many of the activities these clubs offer, including target shooting and sporting clays courses allow for even greater social distancing than launching a boat from a marina or playing a round of golf. Area clubs are committed to protecting public health and allowing them to partially reopen would provide an important opportunity for parents and grandparents home with children to pass the traditions of the shooting sports and teach the next generation safe firearms handling practices. This is an important issue that our local elected officials are engaged with and I am proud to stand side by side with them in supporting our sportsmen and women,” said Senator Pam Helming.

“Reopening shooting sports clubs is another step in a return to safe, recreational activities. As various facets of public life prepare to reopen, it is important to proceed in such a way that the public feels re-assured that the activities can be engaged in safely, responsibly and in adherence to recommendations and guidelines established by our Public Health Officials. Engaging in Shooting Sports is an activity enjoyed by so many of our residents and is a great way to safely participate in outdoor activity, learn and perfect skills and enjoy some leisure time and fresh air while still abiding by social distancing mandates,” said Canandaigua Town Supervisor Cathy Menikotz.

“As concerned citizens of New York, we all look forward to being as fairly treated as equal to the golfer, boater/fishermen, and all outdoor enthusiasts and having the State of New York and the Governor thoughtfully restore our ability to participate in our chosen sports activities and practice our Constitutional rights. As we open our outdoor shooting ranges and course facilities, we would assure those concerned that we would comply with all social distancing and hygiene requirements to help bring this state and national pandemic to its’ eventual conclusion,” said Daniel T. Pitler, President Canandaigua Sportsmen’s Club, Inc.

“As is often the case, we find ourselves with more questions than answers dealing with our new reality as we cope with the world's current pandemic. The main question that we, as NYers have is "When can we get back to our normal lives?". Whatever that new normal may look like, there are bound to be some changes and we understand that. We as a sportsman's organization, like other businesses, cannot stay on "lockdown" for an indeterminate time. In an effort to move forward, we ask that our organizations be afforded the same opportunity as other recreational businesses have been given, to open our ranges back up to our membership and guests. In doing so, proper person to person distancing, as well as adherence to suggested health guidelines would be a priority, and very much attainable. I believe I speak for many men and women, including our high school team members, who

safely engage in our sport year after year. The 2nd Amendment is held in high regard by many upstate NYers, and we eagerly look forward to using our facilities, as intended, in a safe and healthy manner,” said Rick Bills, Hol-Field Rod and Gun Club

“On behalf of Ontario Rod and Gun Club Officers, Board of Directors, and our four hundred (400) members, we request to fully reopen our club to sport shooting, training classes and events. We will follow the guidelines and social distancing, as advised by health professionals,” said Steve Verdi, Chairman of the Board, Ontario Rod & Gun Club.

“The Shooting Sports are activities that are enjoyed by all types of people. Young and old, male and female, athletes and non athletes. Enjoying the outdoor shooting sports whether competing or just plinking is a very healthy way to escape the current stress and anxiety that the COVID pandemic is creating. Concentrating on the “bird” when breaking clays or zeroing in on the bullseye takes strict attention and concentration along with safe gun handling practices to truly be successful. These outdoor activities are one of the safer, if not the safest, social distancing sports out there. Let’s reopen these Sportsmen’s Clubs and get our children, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles out of their homes in a safe environment enjoying the shooting sports once again,” said Jeff Gallahan, Manchester Town Supervisor.

“People are looking for safe recreational activities in this period of social distancing. To allow golf courses and marinas to open with proper distancing, but not shooting clubs like the Canandaigua Sportsmen’s club is just ludicrous. This seems like a political decision, rather than a practical one and once again shows our governors disdain for the second amendment and proves he is out of touch with our part of NYS,” said Jared Simpson, Canandaigua Town Councilman.