



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daphne Jordan

SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN AND SENATE REPUBLICAN COLLEAGUES BLAST DEMOCRATS FOR ABANDONING SMALL BUSINESSES, AGAIN

SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN May 27, 2020

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NEWS

from New York State Senator Daphne Jordan

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Albany – Today, New York State Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I-Halfmoon) and her Senate Republican colleagues blasted Democrats for refusing to assist businesses overwhelmed by the COVID-19 outbreak and economic shutdown. The Legislature convened for the first time since the last week of March – in the midst of the COVID outbreak – to pass a wide array of legislation, with no relief for small businesses struggling to open or reopen following the

government's shutdown of the economy.

Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I-Halfmoon) said, "Between Governor Cuomo shutting down our economy that's caused a massive economic crash and record unemployment, and the Senate Democratic Majority failing to advance any pro-small business legislation, the Democrats in Albany are more interested in playing politics than helping people. While today's Senate Session was a huge missed opportunity to enact a small business support package, the best small business stimulus would be for Governor Cuomo to finally wake up and re-open New York. Albany must get out of the way of job creators by enacting real regulatory relief so small businesses can spend their time and energy reopening and rebuilding, not filling out government paperwork. Given the severity of our economic crisis, we should rethink every spending category and reform Albany's archaic regulatory structure. We need to unleash the biggest economic comeback in American history so our small businesses can get back to business and folks can get back to work."

After talking to small business owners across all sectors and regions of the state, varying in size, several consistent themes emerged. They pointed to important federal assistance, past, and present, but they also identified concerns specific to New York State government. Among them:

- Expand Nourish New York. The program connecting the state's prominent agriculture industry with emergency food shelters has been a rare economic success and a moral triumph. It should be replicated and expanded to connect the state's farms with downstate

markets, which will reinforce New York's supply chain, improve healthy food options, and stimulate the economy.

- Lower the cost of doing business. In New York, labor is the principal cost-driver for businesses. Wage requirements, especially statewide, hurt small businesses and should be postponed. In addition, tax and wage deductions should be considered to stimulate growth and hiring.

- Reduce non-health, non-safety regulations. New York's notorious regulatory environment forces businesses to incur excessive costs and delays, which discourages growth for current and prospective employers. Ill-conceived bans on plastic bags, polystyrene, and other products not only increase costs but also create public health concerns.

- Address budget/policy uncertainty. Many businesses and municipalities are struggling to forecast their next steps simply because so much uncertainty surrounds how they will be impacted by state spending, tax, and policy decisions.

- Fix unemployment. The struggles of DOL to issue unemployment benefits to recipients has been well-documented. In addition, concerns abound regarding if employees will return to work if federal and state benefits and policies incentivize them to stay home.

- Protect Small Business Landlords. Many small business owners and farmers utilize their properties to rent, which provides critical income while also expanding housing options in small communities. They should not be vilified or classified as corporate landlords.

The lawmakers also pointed to specific legislation they believed should be advanced to help small businesses. The legislation, sponsored by both Republican and Democrat legislators alike, included:

- Senate Bill S.5954A: Tax relief for small businesses
- Senate Bill S.8231: Blocking COVID claims from harming experience ratings
- Senate Bill S.8319: Business and municipal grants
- Senate Bill S.8249: Blocking COVID claims from harming experience ratings
- Senate Bill S.7043: Tax credit for hiring first employee
- Senate Bill S.681: Red Tape Reduction Act
- Senate Bill S.4671A: Eliminating the corporate franchise tax for manufacturers

Senator Jordan and Republican lawmakers have held discussions with hundreds of small business owners, employees, and advocacy organizations to develop a Reset Plan for New York's economy and government operations. The four prongs – reopen, reduce, reform, and

revitalize – will provide short and long-term solutions to help New York's businesses reopen and grow as well as recommendations to change the state government's role in the economy.

In reopening, they called to eliminate the one-size-fits-all approach of the early pandemic response and to instead adopt a regional approach to reopening the economy, which has since been implemented. They advocated for the swift, but safe, reopening of all construction, manufacturing, and agriculture-related industries to help them avoid season-sensitive timelines. In working with state agencies to provide clarification on questions pertaining to essential designations and respective opening phases, they identified and called for the elimination of red tape prevalent earlier in the pandemic. They also called for New York to align the businesses on Empire State Development's essential list with that of the Federal government's essential businesses list to ensure continuity and reopen the economy in phases as public health milestones are met.