



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Return To Albany A Missed Opportunity

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR May 28, 2020

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SMALL BUSINESS, NURSING HOMES, UNEMPLOYMENT**



**ONEONTA, 05/28/20** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today called the senate’s brief return to Albany for legislative session a missed opportunity.

**“The legislature’s return to Albany this week resulted in a missed opportunity,”** said Senator Seward. **“Restoring legislative oversight, providing support for nursing homes, and assisting small businesses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic were all high on my priority list. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats dismissed legislation and amendments to address these key issues.”**

Senator Seward and the New York State Senate Republican Conference proposed amendments to:

- Immediately end the governor's one-man rule of New York State after nearly 90 days of control. The proposal would have put New York disaster emergency control policy in line with other states, which limit an executive's powers to 30 days and would have required the governor to receive legislative approval for continuation of such powers. The amendment would have also mandated that the governor transmit weekly reports to the legislature during an emergency declaration and created communication between the governor and the parties affected by a suspension of laws during a state disaster emergency.
- Direct \$100 million in unused Federal CARES Act funding to nursing homes and assisted living facilities to help purchase testing supplies and PPE.
- Help small businesses across the state that have been devastated by the COVID-19 shutdown by ensuring that these businesses will not see their Unemployment Insurance costs skyrocket in the days ahead as a result of layoffs caused through no fault of their own. Many of these crucial employers have been struggling to survive, and this will help them get through the challenging times that lie ahead.

**“Help for those who continue to struggle because they cannot access their unemployment benefits was also not addressed. After three months, constituents are still contacting me desperate for help. The governor and the Department of Labor commissioner must answer to this systematic failure,”** added Seward.

Senator Seward previously joined with the Senate Republicans to offer a multi-step plan to assist those filing for unemployment. They have also called for a state legislative joint

committee to review and investigate the Department of Labor's failed handling of unemployment benefits throughout the pandemic.

**“I will continue to push for additional legislative days in the near future and will advocate for commonsense legislation that will meet real needs and help our state recover,”** Seward concluded.