



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Officials Celebrate Success of Church-based Testing in Downtown Port Chester

SHELLEY B. MAYER June 4, 2020

| ISSUE: **PORT CHESTER, CORONAVIRUS TESTING, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**



PORT CHESTER, NY -- Elected officials representing the State of New York, Village of Port Chester and Westchester County gathered in front of the Segunda Iglesia Pentecostal Juan 3:16 Church in downtown Port Chester to promote the free diagnostic and antibody testing at the church's location in the hard-hit Port Chester community. The free testing, over multiple days, was provided by Northwell Health in conjunction with Governor Andrew

Cuomo's church-based initiative to enhance testing in communities of color throughout New York State.

The testing site is hosted by Segunda Iglesia Pentecostal Juan 3:16 and runs on weekdays from Monday, June 1 to Monday, June 8th, 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. To be diagnosed for COVID-19 or to be tested for antibodies at the Port Chester testing site, community members must make an appointment by calling 1-833-422-7369. Testing is open to New Yorkers outside of Port Chester as well. No questions are asked for those seeking the test.

The Village of Port Chester has a population of nearly 30,000 residents. As of Wednesday, June 3rd, there were 1,218 confirmed cases of coronavirus in Port Chester since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, and 36 active cases. Based on the number of total confirmed cases, Port Chester has the highest percentage of its population infected or recovering from COVID-19 out of all municipalities in Westchester County.

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "We know that testing is vital to combating this pandemic, and it is essential that we place testing centers in locations that are accessible to all New Yorkers—especially those who rely on public transportation or who cannot travel long distances. I am very pleased to have worked with Senator Mayer, Northwell Health and Governor Cuomo to ensure that Port Chester residents who need to be tested are able to come to this convenient new site."

County Executive George Latimer said, "Port Chester is one of the communities where we saw the greatest need from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. By opening up this testing site,

we are sending a strong message to our residents that we care very much about their health and well-being, and that we are committed to helping them overcome this illness. I encourage everyone who can to take full advantage of the free diagnostic and antibody testing at Segunda Iglesia Pentecostal Juan.”

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “The coronavirus pandemic has been hard on many communities, but it has been especially challenging for the Village of Port Chester. As my colleagues and I saw the rate of positive cases in the Village, we pushed to bring a free testing site to a church in the downtown area of the Village, where the majority of the Hispanic residents live in apartments and multi-family housing. Thank you to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Governor Andrew Cuomo, Port Chester Village Trustee Luis Marino, and Pastor Eliezer Quintana for their work and advocacy to bring this free testing site to Port Chester.”

Port Chester Village Trustee Luis Marino said, "I am very happy with the number of community members who are using this opportunity to come and get tested. Over 500 people have been tested so far for antibodies, and I can see how happy village residents are with the testing site being convenient and accessible. I appreciate the cooperation with Westchester County, State Legislators, and Governor Andrew Cuomo's office to secure this testing site in the downtown area of Port Chester, and I hope to continue to work together to ensure every village resident has the opportunity to get tested."

Assemblyman Steve Otis said, “It was very important that we could bring a testing site to Port Chester where we have seen one of the highest per capita Covid-19 rates in the county. Testing is a vital part of the effort to stop the spread of the disease and the strong turnout at

this site demonstrates the need. Thanks go to Governor Cuomo, Northwell Health, Pastor Quintana, Senators Stewart-Cousins and Mayer, County Executive Latimer and all of my colleagues in state, county and local government. We all are working together to fight Covid-19 and help Port Chester.”

County Legislator Nancy Barr said, “I want to thank my colleagues in State and Local government for bringing COVID-19 testing to Port Chester – Governor Andrew Cuomo, Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Shelley Mayer, Port Chester Village Mayor Richard “Fritz” Falanka and the Port Chester Trustees. We know that COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted minority communities and those who live in apartment buildings and multi-family homes, and it is critical that local residents have access to testing close to home to prevent the spread and to control the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to Pastor Quintana for opening the Segunda Iglesia Pentecostal Juan 3:16 Church to the local community, and to the Northwell Health professionals for administering the testing.”

Pastor Eliezer Quintana, Segunda Iglesia Pentecostal Juan 3:16, said, “I am happy that we were able to make our church available for such a great cause for our community. Our community members have to work, and sometimes employers don’t accept them if they don’t have a test done, and going to the hospital to get tested can be expensive. We are deeply grateful for Senator Shelley Mayer, Trustee Luis Marino, and Governor Andrew Cuomo for being able to do this for us.”

Port Chester Village Mayor Richard “Fritz” Falanka said, “I would like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Senator Shelley Mayer for providing a Covid-19 testing site in the Village of Port Chester. This site has provided

many of our Village residents especially our most vulnerable residents the opportunity to receive a free COVID-19 test.”

Port Chester Village Trustee Alex Payan said, “Today, we see everywhere in Port Chester that our Village, our economic and private life looks completely different from 3 months ago. Our own behavior is currently the most effective antidote we have against COVID-19. That is why getting tested is so important today. We must reduce public life as much as is possible, to reduce contact with people whom the virus could be transmitted. It is in our collective interest to do what is right for our community.”