



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

## With Phase 3 Indoor Dining At Risk, Senator Gounardes and Councilman Brannan Call on Mayor to Enact Community-Based Social Distancing Enforcement

ANDREW GOUNARDES June 30, 2020

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**Southern Brooklyn** – After observing a distressing lack of social distancing and mask wearing in southern Brooklyn and across the city since the first two phases of re-opening, Senator Andrew Gounardes and Councilman Justin Brannan are calling on Mayor de Blasio to engage local community groups to encourage compliance with social distancing.

While the re-opening of bars and restaurants is a necessary step for the health of the City's economy, failure to follow State and City guidance on social distancing and mask-wearing will once again threaten the lives and livelihoods of New Yorkers, sending us back into the nightmarish days of March and April.

Senator Gounardes and Councilman Brannan urge the Mayor to step up education around social distancing requirements, by empowering local community groups to educate their neighbors and act as ambassadors of the City and State, and to implement consequences for repeated and intentional violations. They urge the Mayor and the Governor to postpone the opening of indoor dining if an enforcement mechanism is not created.

“New Yorkers might be done with COVID, but unfortunately COVID isn’t done with New York just yet,” said **Councilman Justin Brannan**. “It is so great to see businesses opening up again but we cannot let New Yorkers act as if everything is back to normal. Phase 2 or Phase 3 doesn’t mean COVID is gone. Far from it. And if we mess this up now, we will erase all the sacrifice and progress we made over the past four months. There needs to be a middle ground between the City doing absolutely nothing about social distancing compliance and just shutting down businesses that are just trying to get back on their feet after months in the dark. I agree with the Mayor and the NYPD that this isn't a job for them, but we need an alternative. We have to put pressure on New Yorkers to abide by the rules, socially distance themselves, and wear a mask when going out in public. Community groups are the best equipped to do that job in their own neighborhoods but we need to empower them and have a framework in place to get it done.”

“The science is clear: wearing a mask in public reduces the spread of COVID, and the risk of indoor transmission is almost 20 times greater than outdoor transmission,” said **Senator Andrew Gounardes**. “But that doesn't mean New Yorkers can crowd outside of bars and restaurants without wearing masks or socially distancing at all. While we are all desperate to get back to normal, slacking on social distancing requirements puts our community members' lives at risk – plain and simple. We must increase compliance if we are going to open for indoor dining and ensure that our progress against the virus is here to stay.”