



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

Southern Brooklyn Elected Officials Call to Bring Outdoor Dining Back Every Year!

ANDREW GOUNARDES July 29, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATOR ANDREW GOUNARDES, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, NYC OPEN RESTAURANTS PROGRAM**

Brooklyn, NY - Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Mathylde Frontus today called to make outdoor dining permanent in warm weather months. The officials cited the popularity of Open Restaurants, the unclear timeline of the pandemic and the significant costs restaurant owners have incurred to participate. The city has added new guidelines as the program has continued, forcing restaurants to spend thousands of dollars to further renovate their outdoor seating.

“To ensure our beloved local restaurants can stay afloat and with no clear end in sight for this pandemic, the city should commit to making the Open Restaurant Program permanent. This has been one bright spot of normalcy for New Yorkers in a dark time, and so long as we can ensure the program’s safety, it’s time to keep the open seating for good,” said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes**.

“Local restaurants define the character and sustain the economy of our communities. Making the Open Restaurants Program permanent would help small businesses through this crisis and make our communities more vibrant,” said **Assemblymember Mathylde Frontus**.

"Our restaurants are a large part of the fabric that makes Brooklyn neighborhoods special. Since the shutdown, they have been on life support. Year round outdoor dining, combined with a continuing emphasis on takeout & delivery and "to go" privileges for alcoholic beverages, are the best plan for longer-term sustainability," said **Randy Peers, President & CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.**

"Outdoor dining has become a critical lifeline for our city's beloved and struggling restaurants during the COVID-10 pandemic. The Open Restaurant's program has also provided New Yorkers a glimpse into how reimagining our streetscape beautifies our blocks and avenues, supports small businesses and jobs, and fosters a more livable city. Now is the time to begin planning for a permanent outdoor dining program that's inclusive and strengthens local restaurants and neighborhoods well into the future," said **Andrew Rigie, Executive Director of the NYC Hospitality Alliance.**

"In lieu of indoor dining, the Open Restaurant Program should become permanent. Restaurants are vital to the city's economy, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in sales and revenue. Our elected officials must do everything in their power to #saverestaurants," said **Jumana Bishara**, co-owner of local restaurant Tanoreen.