



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May Announces Nursing Home Legislation and Community Events

RACHEL MAY June 5, 2020

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS; COVID-19; SENIORS; NURSING HOMES; ADULT CARE FACILITIES**

| COMMITTEE: **AGING**



Syracuse, NY - Senator Rachel May (D-Onondaga, Madison, Oneida) has joined fellow New York state legislators in passing key legislation designed to address some immediate concerns relating to nursing home care during the pandemic. The actions were in response to the devastating toll the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on nursing home residents and staff across the state over the last several months.

Among other legislation targeting challenges that have arisen as a result of the pandemic, the Senate and Assembly passed a bill ([S.8397A](#)) that prohibits health care employers from retaliating against health care workers who report concerns about workplace safety or health violations. Nursing home workers would be covered by these expanded protections.

A second nursing-home related bill ([S.8289B](#)) passed by both the Senate and the Assembly requires that residential health care facilities prepare and comply with an annual pandemic emergency plan. This will help these facilities ensure the safety of their staff and residents during pandemics like COVID-19.

Both bills await Governor Cuomo's signature.

"These bills provide support for nursing home residents and staff, who along with hospital workers really have been on the front lines of this pandemic," **says Senator May, who chairs the Senate Committee on Aging.** "They are an important start. But we have a lot more to do to better protect those who live or work in our nursing homes for future such crises. While the Committee on Aging does not have direct oversight of nursing homes, we certainly play an important role in promoting the well-being of all seniors. And I am committed to working together with my legislative colleagues to do all we can to ensure our most vulnerable seniors never face this level of risk again."

Senator May also joined her colleague Senator Andrew Gounardes in introducing a bill to strengthen protections in nursing homes during public health emergencies ([S.8270A](#)). Among other measures, this legislation would require nursing homes to maintain adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, such as masks and gowns, during pandemics. It also calls for expanded and consistent communication between nursing homes and families as well as with residents. It would require nursing homes to inform families of alternative-care options and to facilitate transfers, with support from the Department of Health, if desired.

The proposed legislation would apply specifically during state disaster emergencies relating to a disease outbreak.

In addition to the legislative activity, Senator May joined in several nursing-home focused virtual events in the past week, including a statewide [Elder Law Forum](#) focusing on pandemic-related issues affecting older New Yorkers; and a [virtual roundtable](#), organized by the senior advocacy group StateWide Senior Action Council. Both events focused on immediate issues and potential next steps, legislatively and otherwise, to better safeguard the needs and interests of seniors, particularly nursing home residents, in times of crisis.

#

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S8397A

- Introduced

- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Relates to prohibiting health care employers from penalizing employees because of complaints of employer violations

May 21, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by [Diane J. Savino](#)

Do you support this bill?

2019-S8289B

- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Relates to requiring residential health care facilities to prepare an annual pandemic emergency plan to the commissioner of health

May 06, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by [Julia Salazar](#)

Do you support this bill?

2019-S8270A

- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Relates to establishing requirements for residential healthcare facilities during a state disaster emergency involving a disease outbreak

May 01, 2020

In Senate Committee [Health](#)

Sponsored by [Andrew Gounardes](#)

Do you support this bill?