



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

Senator Gounardes, Councilman Brannan Call for NYC Indoor Dining Guidelines

ANDREW GOUNARDES August 19, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATOR ANDREW GOUNARDES, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, INDOOR DINING**

Brooklyn – Today, Councilman Justin Brannan and Senator Andrew Gounardes called on Governor Andrew Cuomo to prioritize issuing guidance on indoor dining for the five boroughs. Indoor dining has been allowed to resume with guidelines elsewhere in New York State.

Restaurants are among the many businesses that have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and many have already closed. Others are hanging on by a thread thanks to outdoor dining, but no plan appears to be in place for when outdoor dining ends or when the weather gets colder. Brannan and Gounardes believe the state owes business owners and employees more transparency about when they can expect to open their doors again.

“Right now, New Yorkers can travel a few miles to Long Island or Westchester for indoor dining and then come right back to New York City,” Councilman Brannan and Senator Gounardes said in a joint statement. “We need an explanation as to how that is any safer than allowing indoor dining in New York City... Local small business owners deserve to know what COVID-related metrics need to be met in order for them to seat customers inside. Workers deserve to know if their jobs are coming back or if they should start looking

elsewhere."

The legislators also emphasized that clarity was important from a public health perspective.

"New Yorkers deserve to know how the virus will be kept under control when indoor dining returns," Brannan and Gounardes said. "Diners and the general public deserve to feel confident that when indoor dining returns, there will be a plan in place to ensure we do not see a resurgence of the virus."

The two lawmakers ended their statement with a final call for details and transparency.

"We all want New York to get back to business as usual. We all want a return to some sort of normal. We also know that it must be done safely and based on science. But we are nearing September and there are still no details on how we will resume indoor dining at New York City restaurants, even though through hard work we've met, sustained, and exceeded the metrics that have allowed restaurants throughout the rest of New York State to reopen indoors. So let's get everybody on the same page so we all know what to expect."