



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo urges Governor to implement designated caregiver program for New York's nursing homes

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO September 16, 2020

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New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-C-I-Rome, said today that revised guidance from the state Department of Health regarding its nursing home visitation policy was a step in the right direction but that major changes still need to be made. Sen. Griffo has communicated with the Health Department and the Governor's office to express his concerns.

Limited visits to nursing homes in the state may resume Thursday as long as a facility has been without a COVID-19 case for at least 14 days, according to updated guidance released by the department Tuesday. Previous guidance had set the threshold at 28 days without a coronavirus case but the regulation has proven difficult for many facilities to meet.

"There is still a need for further review and revision of this flawed policy," Sen. Griffo said.

"With the appropriate safety and health protocols and procedures in place, there is no reason that visitation at nursing homes cannot be done in a similar manner to what takes place at hospitals on a daily basis."

Sen. Griffo also urged Gov. Andrew Cuomo and state Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker to take action to designate family members of nursing home residents as

essential caregivers. New Jersey and other states have implemented similar policies, which can help to improve residents' daily care and well-being.

“New Jersey has implemented a designated caregiver program that has been working and has been successful,” Sen. Griffo said. “There is no reason that New York cannot do the same. It is imperative that we take action quickly to ensure that nursing home residents get the care and attention that they deserve.”

Since the start of the pandemic, nursing home residents and their families have reached out to Sen. Griffo about serious and significant concerns they have regarding these facilities and COVID-19. Sen. Griffo continues to express these concerns, which included the mental, emotional and physical effect that lockdowns and a lack of visitation can have on residents, to the Health Department and Governor's administration.

The Senator also is advocating for the complete overhaul of the nursing home industry.

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