



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senator O'Mara's weekly column 'From the Capitol' ~ for the week of January 11, 2021 ~ 'Re-setting New York State for the post-COVID future'

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 11, 2021

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We need to keep working against a New York State tax and regulatory climate that puts our businesses and manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, imposes red tape that strangles local economies, and prioritizes higher and higher spending, overtaxing, outrageous mandates, and burdensome overregulation.

Senator O'Mara offers his weekly perspective on many of the key challenges and issues facing the Legislature, as well as on legislative actions, local initiatives, state programs and

policies, and more. Stop back every Monday for Senator O'Mara's latest column...

This week, "Re-setting New York State for the post-COVID future"

In yet another reminder of these COVID-19 times, the 2021 legislative session kicks into high gear on Monday when Governor Andrew Cuomo delivers New York's first-ever virtual State of the State address to New Yorkers.

Nevertheless, what won't change about this annual speech is that we'll get a better sense of the direction Governor Cuomo intends to try to take this state in the months and possibly years ahead. We're expecting to hear a direction not just to continue steering this state through the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to begin the rebuilding and recovering of local communities and economies that needs to start now, in my opinion.

Toward that end, I joined my colleagues at the Capitol last week to unveil a "Reset New York State" agenda identifying the broad outlines of our conference's priorities for the new legislative session and beyond.

I can promise you that the Senate GOP plans to be a voice for local economies, taxpayers, job creators, workers, and communities.

We need to keep working against a New York State tax and regulatory climate that puts our businesses and manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, imposes red tape that strangles local economies, and prioritizes higher and higher spending, overtaxing, outrageous mandates, and burdensome overregulation.

So I look forward throughout this new legislative session to our Senate Republican Conference giving voice to the need for rebuilding local economies, focusing on stronger and safer communities, and resisting what threatens to be a devastating expansion of a business-as-usual, tax-and-spend direction in state government.

This "Reset New York State" strategy serves to highlight our commitment to more fiscally responsible, commonsense government that works better for taxpayers, builds and protects livelihoods, honors public safety and security, and focuses like never before on the restoration of Upstate's rightful place in New York government.

Make no mistake that our conference, together with the Assembly Republican Conference, will be fighting an uphill battle against a New York State government now squarely under one-party,

mostly downstate-based, Democratic control. Furthermore, an extremely liberal, far-left wing of the party has clearly made inroads and established itself at the highest levels of leadership and will continue to push what I see as radical policies within the arenas of criminal justice and law enforcement, taxation and economics, environmental protection and energy, and health care, to pinpoint just a few.

That won't stand in our way of fighting for what we believe represents the best direction for this state and the regions we represent.

Our initial blueprint highlights several broad strategies to address mounting economic and fiscal challenges facing communities statewide -- many of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic -- and to help forge a better path forward for all New Yorkers. We will be introducing and focusing on specific proposals throughout the coming weeks and months that prioritize restarting local economies, rethinking the operation of state government, and renewing a commitment to stronger, safer, and revitalized communities.

The broad outline of the overall strategy seeks to restart local economies by safely reopening small businesses to help them get back on their feet, get their employees back to work, and offer employment opportunities for local residents; ensuring that schools and colleges stay open; and making renewed investments in infrastructure -- including broadband, and local roads and bridges-- to rebuild the state's competitiveness.

We're seeking to rethink the operation of New York State government by addressing New York's long-standing reputation as a high cost of living state; restoring fiscal responsibility and confronting state government's culture of overspending; and reasserting the Legislature's constitutional authority as an equal branch of government.

Finally, we're looking to renew New York State's commitment to local residents by fostering the growth of vibrant local communities; developing a robust economy with diverse opportunities; and creating safer neighborhoods with commonsense public safety measures.

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