



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daphne Jordan

## Standing up for Saratoga: Senator Daphne Jordan, Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, Senator Jim Tedisco, and Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh made a bipartisan push for full restoration of VLT Host Aid for Saratoga Springs & Saratoga County in the 2021-22 budget

DAPHNE JORDAN January 27, 2021

| ISSUE: **VIDEO LOTTERY TERMINAL FUNDING, NYS BUDGET**

**Albany, NY** – Standing up for Saratoga! That’s the message from New York State Senator Daphne Jordan, New York State Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, New York State Senator Jim Tedisco, and New York State Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh who launched a bipartisan push seeking a full restoration of Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) Host Aid for the City of Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County in the 2021-22 State Budget.

Begun in State Fiscal Year 07-08, VLT Host Aid is a category of State aid specifically created to support assumed local service needs and costs that are associated with hosting VLT facilities, especially public safety and other significant expenses incurred by local governments.

The state legislators wrote Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie urging a full restoration of VLT Host Aid of \$2,325,592 for Saratoga Springs and \$775,198 for Saratoga County, respectively. All told, the

combined VLT Host Aid restoration being sought by the legislators amounts to \$3,100,790, funding that is critically important for the City of Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County.

The urgent need for the VLT Host Aid funding restoration within the 2021-22 State Budget is due to Governor Cuomo's recently released 2021-22 Executive Budget proposal having eliminated this critical funding to 15 municipalities outside of Yonkers, including Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County. All told, the Governor's 2021-22 Executive Budget proposal would eliminate a total of \$10.3 million in VLT Host Aid funding statewide unless the funding is restored.

"From a 2020 track season with no fans permitted on-site, to the ongoing statewide economic downturn, to the staggering costs of protecting public health during the pandemic, it's a fact that our local communities are reeling from the financial impact of COVID-19. That's why a full restoration of VLT Host Aid is critically important for Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County as a loss of this funding would devastate local finances and result in a reduction or elimination of, essential local services. As the proud home to the world-renowned Saratoga Race Course and Saratoga Casino Hotel, we must preserve and protect our community's local share of VLT Host Aid that's so important to our local economy, to horse racing, and our way of life. That's why I'm partnering with my colleagues in urging the Governor, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Speaker Heastie to make the full restoration of VLT funding a priority," **Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I-Halfmoon), the Ranking Republican Member on the Senate Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee, said.**

"New York State made a commitment to provide impact aid to communities that host a Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) facility. This aid is essential to offsetting costs associated with hosting a VLT facility, including costs associated with public safety. " In order to avoid devastating cuts to local municipal budgets I am calling for its full restoration in this year's

state budget,” **Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner (D-Round Lake) said.**

“The Saratoga Race Course and Saratoga Casino and Hotel are important economic drivers for Saratoga County and the entire Capital Region, which have generated over \$1 billion in revenue for the state. The Governor’s proposed elimination of VLT aid to the host communities outside of Yonkers would negatively impact taxpayers in Saratoga County, Saratoga Springs and the Capital Region. This geographic discrimination must be corrected and the legislative majority leaders need to do the right thing and make a full restoration of this vital state aid,” **said Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-Glenville).**

“I am pleased to join my colleagues in calling for the full restoration of Video Lottery Terminal Host Aid that is vital to the financial well-being of Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County,” **said Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh (R,C,I-Ballston).** “It is no secret that the Saratoga Race Course and Saratoga Casino Hotel are major economic drivers for our region, and a financial loss to this degree would be devastating, particularly given the impact COVID-19 has had on these industries that Saratoga County so proudly depends on.”

Text of the correspondence issued by Senator Jordan, Assemblywoman Woerner, Senator Tedisco, and Assemblywoman Woerner is attached with this news release.

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