



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Senator Cooney Backs Rochester Restaurants

JEREMY COONEY January 19, 2021

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19; SMALL BUSINESS**



(Albany/Rochester, NY) Today, Senator **Jeremy Cooney (SD-56)** from his Albany office hosted a virtual roundtable with Jon Swan of the Swan Family of Restaurants, Kelly Metras, owner of Nox/Salena's, and local restaurant worker Lakeyva "Lucky" Catala to hear their concerns about the pandemic. Senator Cooney highlighted new legislation that he is co-sponsoring in the senate that helps restaurants navigate COVID-19 regulations and safely reopen. Two specific points in the legislation are a cap on 3rd party delivery app fees at 20% of the order, and preventing apps from listing menus without a restaurant's consent.

Senator Cooney discussed the arbitrary nature of the orange zone restrictions that are hurting Rochester businesses, and called on the Governor to support restaurant owners' ability to safely reopen under the yellow zone safety measures.

"Rochester is a foodie town, but I am deeply concerned about the ability of restaurant owners and workers to navigate continued uncertainty. I am committed to ending arbitrary state regulations on restaurants to help them safely operate, as well as cracking down on the predatory behavior of third party delivery apps.

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I am proud to co-sponsor legislation to help our hard-working small businesses and make sure that local workers can put food on their own table," said Cooney.

"The hospitality industry needs help: real, unveiled, easily accessible help. We need our leaders to recognize what is being lost, we need our establishments and their employees to be considered when future mandates are made. These reforms are a step in the right direction in assisting our devastated hospitality industry," said Jon Swan of the Swan Family of Restaurants.

"Restaurants create community and are a vital part of the strength of a neighborhood. It is imperative that we continue to receive equitable treatment and aid so that we can be here when the pandemic lifts and help Rochester continue to grow to the prosperity this city deserves. Rochester's restaurant scene is not healthy- the orange zone mandates left us on the brink of collapse.

We understand the importance of a healthy and safe staff and community and will do whatever it takes to secure that. In the Spring, restaurants rose up to the mandates to ensure safety regardless of the cost. We ran our businesses at 50% capacity, for an industry that

runs at a 3-5% profit margin in the best of times. There's no safety net or rainy-day fund left for those that even had it," said Nox/Salena's owner Kelly Metras.

"This has been an extremely trying time. My finances are in shambles, yet, I still worry about how to keep customers and staff safe during COVID. We need to reopen, but responsibly and with the support from our government," said local service industry worker Lakeyva "Lucky" Catala.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2021-S1630A

- 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

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Relates to third-party delivery services

January 14, 2021

Signed by Governor

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Do you support this bill?