



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, colleagues call for income tax break for unemployed New Yorkers: Senate Republicans push to exclude \$10,200 in unemployment benefits from NYS taxable income to ease economic burden caused by COVID-19 shutdowns

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Albany, N.Y., March 31--State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and other members of the Senate Republican Conference today tried to advance a legislative amendment to exclude unemployment benefits from taxable income.

The legislators said that the move would keep New York State consistent with an action already taken by the federal government to exclude the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits from 2020 taxable income.

O'Mara, the Ranking Member on the Senate Finance Committee, said, "The COVID-19 economic shutdown has already taken an enormous toll on thousands upon thousands of hard-hit unemployed New Yorkers and their families and communities. New York State needs to follow the federal government's lead and provide a badly needed exemption from state taxes. We can't keep piling financial burden upon financial burden and expect workers to ever get back on solid ground again."

The Senate amendment O'Mara co-sponsored is modeled on legislation (S5125A) sponsored by Senate Majority member Senator Simcha Felder of New York City.

It was defeated by the Senate Democrat majority along a party-line vote. Every member of the majority conference voted against the proposal to provide the needed relief to struggling New Yorkers.

According to the Department of Labor, 4.6 million New Yorkers received unemployment and pandemic unemployment benefits since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic last year. The \$10,200 in tax relief in this measure would cover 17 weeks of the \$600 per week unemployment benefit. California, New Jersey, Oregon, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Virginia exempt unemployment insurance benefits.