



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Video Included: Tedisco, Senate Republicans Call for Income Tax Break for Unemployed New Yorkers

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO March 31, 2021

**Senator Jim Tedisco** (R,C-Glenville) today offered an amendment on the Senate Floor, supported by **Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt** and the entire **Senate Republican Conference**, to exclude unemployment benefits from taxable income to be consistent with the federal government.

**View Senator Tedisco's remarks here:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nu2HtzzjCdE>

Last week, after Tedisco's prodding, the Governor moved New York State's income tax deadline from April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 17<sup>th</sup> to be in line with the federal government. However, the Governor has refused to follow the federal government's lead and exclude the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits from 2020 taxable income.

The amendment is modeled on legislation sponsored by Senate Majority member Senator Simcha Felder, [S.5125A](#).

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.

“The ‘Empire State’ is fast becoming the ‘Empty State’ because New York leads the nation in high taxes. Those who faced unemployment this past year through no fault of their own due to the pandemic have been struggling to pay their mortgages, put food on the table and provide for their families. They should not have to pay state taxes on the first \$10,200 of their unemployment insurance when the federal government is giving them an income tax exemption on the same benefit. Now that New York’s \$15 billion deficit has been erased, those who lost their jobs during this past year should get a tax break, not a tax slap. If the Majority wants to block our amendment as a procedural vote for political reasons, then they should walk the walk and the next session day move Senator Felder’s bill through committee and onto the Senate Floor Calendar so Democrats and Republicans can stand up for our beleaguered workforce,” **said Senator Jim Tedisco, a member of the Senate Finance Committee.**

“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,” **said Senator Tom O’Mara, ranking member on the Senate Finance Committee.**

“All New Yorkers and their businesses have faced significant financial hardship during the past year. In fact, 4.6 million New Yorkers received unemployment and pandemic unemployment benefits since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. No one that received UI assistance over the past year should be taxed on the benefit received. The federal government has already exempted UI benefits from taxation, and New York must immediately follow suit. Every Senator should support this commonsense amendment,” **said**

**Senator Alexis Weik, ranking member of the Senate Budget & Revenue Committee.**

“The pandemic has put tremendous financial stress on millions of employees who lost their jobs due to COVID-related shutdowns. This is a commonsense amendment -- that would mirror actions to provide an exemption taken by the federal government -- to provide much-needed relief to hardworking New Yorkers who are continuing to struggle with the economic impacts of the pandemic,” **said Senate Republican Leader Robert Ort.**

Every member of the Senate Democratic conference voted against this proposal to provide needed relief to struggling New Yorkers.