



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

SERINO HIGHLIGHTS FAILING OF LEGISLATION THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO CURTAIL GOVERNOR'S POWERS

SUSAN SERINO April 19, 2021

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ALBANY, NY – In March of this year, the Legislature's Supermajority passed watered down legislation they claimed would roll back the Governor's Emergency Powers. While the news was met with great fanfare at the time, in the weeks that followed, the Governor has openly flaunted the new law, extending almost all of his Executive Orders without the required explanation or legislative oversight.

Senator Sue Serino today brought an amendment to the Senate floor that would truly repeal the Governor's Emergency Pandemic Powers and restore the Legislature as a co-equal branch of government.

"I said it when the legislation passed, and I will say it again: the Supermajority's bill to 'curtail' the Governor's powers was nothing but a sham," said Senator Serino. "New Yorkers have seen no meaningful changes and have continued to be subjected to the arbitrary rulemaking that has severely hampered our recovery efforts. Despite calls from an overwhelming majority of members of the Senate for the Governor's resignation, the Supermajority has remained complicit in allowing one-man rule here in the Capitol, and it is having a very real and dangerous impact on the people we serve. It is not right, and the lawmakers need to get back to doing the jobs they were elected to do."

On March 5th, the Legislature's Supermajority passed legislation that was supposed to limit the Governor's emergency pandemic powers. That legislation expressly requires the Governor's office to explain the need for any extension or modification of emergency directives on their website. However, on April 6th, the Governor quietly issued a new Executive Order that extended all previously issued directives for 30 days and only posted the "need" for extension for seven out of 175 directives on the state's website.

Senator Serino attached her amendment to bill S. 3666, which would amend the Real Property Law to eliminate unreasonable fees levied on tenants for reproductions of lost keys. While Serino noted that the bill had a laudable goal, she pointed out the irony of passing legislation that would have a limited impact when the Legislature has refused to take action against any of the Executive Orders that are having a crushing impact on New York's employers and employees.

In arguing for the passage of the amendment Senator Serino said, "I find it awfully ironic that we're voting to limit an 'unreasonable' fee on something as small as a house key while this body continues to take no real action to limit the mountain of unreasonable orders that have been issued since the start of the pandemic."

Specifically, Senator Serino pointed to examples that impact the Hudson Valley bar and restaurant industry, including the arbitrary curfew they are forced to adhere to and the random rule that prohibits them from selling a beverage without food. Last month, Senator Serino and her colleagues introduced concurrent resolutions to rescind both (**J541** and **B477**). While both of these orders were scheduled to expire on April 30th, the mandates have now been extended, and so far, despite bipartisan support, the resolutions have not been taken up by Senate Democrats.

The Legislature's Supermajority rejected Senator Serino's amendment outright, as they have over 30 other times when Senate Republicans put forward an amendment to strip the Governor's emergency powers and restore the Legislature as a co-equal branch of government.