



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Senator Borrello Urges DOH Guidance to Open County Fairs

GEORGE M. BORRELLO May 5, 2021

| ISSUE: [COVID-19](#), [COUNTY FAIRS](#), [AGRICULTURE](#)



ALBANY – Senator George Borrello is strongly urging immediate action by New York State Department of Health Commissioner, Dr. Howard Zucker, to release guidance that will allow county fairs to open for their 2021 season.

In a letter to Commissioner Zucker, Senator Borrello questioned why guidance was issued for the New York State Fair, which will open this August, while local county fairs have been left to languish with uncertainty.

“It’s unconscionable and completely unfair that Albany has made sure the New York State Fair, which Governor Cuomo attends every year, will be able to have a season this summer while our county fairs are being neglected,” Senator Borrello said. “Unfortunately, this is par for the course when it comes to the directives being issued by Albany during this pandemic.

“What prompted my letter is the cancellation of the Chautauqua County Fair for the second year in a row. Not knowing what the regulations will be, county and fair officials were unable to plan for the event and were forced to cancel. It’s heartbreaking that our young farmers and ranchers from Chautauqua County and surrounding communities won’t have a chance to compete and exhibit at the fair,” Senator Borrello said.

“The county fairs support agricultural youth programs including 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA) and local livestock clubs. The future of New York farming and agriculture economy depends on these young farmers and ranchers and they depend on their local county fairs,” Senator Borrello added.

Prior to New York State’s COVID-19 lockdown mandates, issued as Executive Orders by Governor Cuomo, the only time the Chautauqua County Fair was cancelled in its 140-year history was during World War II.

“New York’s 55 county fairs are essential to the local economies they support. In the 57<sup>th</sup> Senate District, the Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua County fairs draw over 100,000 fairgoers each summer, and generate almost \$8 million in sales, benefiting local economies and boosting sales tax revenues,” Senator Borrello said. “Fair directors need guidance from the New York State Department of Health to plan for a successful 2021 fair season, and I’m urging Commissioner Zucker and Governor Cuomo to release that guidance as soon as

possible.”

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