



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Regional lawmakers urge Governor to allow full reopening of local DMV offices: Say it's unacceptable that local residents are sometimes waiting three to four weeks for appointments

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 7, 2021

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We share this urgency on the part of local governments as well as on behalf of the local residents we represent for whom limited, appointment-only local DMV services pose an unnecessary inconvenience and lack of accessibility. It is our understanding that on average in the counties we represent, the wait time for an appointment at the local DMV is three to four weeks. That is simply unacceptable.

**Elmira, N.Y., May 7**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes (R,C-Caledonia), Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblyman Joe Giglio (R,C-Olean), and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) today sent a letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo calling on the governor to allow the full reopening of local Department Motor Vehicles offices.

O'Mara and Palmesano, who recently met with local leaders across the region, said that it's unacceptable that local residents are waiting, on average, three to four weeks for appointments at local DMV offices. Furthermore, they said that county leaders are prepared to accomplish a safe and full reopening of their DMV offices.

In a May 7 letter to the governor, O'Mara, Byrnes, Friend, Giglio and Palmesano wrote, "As New York State begins to take aggressive steps towards fully reopening our local economies -- as well as our civic, educational and social lives -- we appreciate this opportunity to urge your administration's immediate attention to the need to allow local offices of the state Department of Motor Vehicles to fully reopen with the restart of walk-in services. We share this urgency on the part of local governments as well as on behalf of the local residents we represent for whom limited, appointment-only local DMV services pose an unnecessary inconvenience and lack of accessibility. It is our understanding that on average in the counties we represent, the wait time for an appointment at the local DMV is three to four weeks. That is simply unacceptable...In short, we believe, as we hope you do, that based on science and facts, fully reopening the local DMV offices can be done safely due to the significant number of New Yorkers that have been vaccinated combined with the continued decrease in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. Local governments have been among the hardest-hit sectors throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The immediate removal of State-imposed reopening restrictions like limiting local DMV transactions is critical to the short- and long-term recovery of our local governments and, equally important, to a more rapid

rebuilding and resetting of our local communities and economies for the sake of our local residents and their return to normal.”

The area lawmakers said that transactions at local DMV offices also represent an important source of revenue for county governments and their full-time operation is critical to the ability of local governments to recover from the COVID-19 shutdown.

“It has been brought to our attention by a number of counties we represent that it remains an ongoing and significant loss of local revenue while local DMVs are operating on an appointment-only and/or drop box basis to serve local residents,” they wrote in their letter to Cuomo.

[see attached copy of letter above]