NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senate and Assembly Republicans keep pushing action to end Cuomo's COVID-19 emergency powers: O'Mara condemns ongoing mask mandate in schools, continues to call for restoring legislative checks and balances and local decision-making

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We will not stop fighting to restore legislative checks and balances in New York State government. Endless executive orders have failed and keep failing New York's local communities, families, economies, and workers. It's unthinkable that the Albany Democrats continue to let Governor Cuomo sit in Albany, exert total control, and issue directive after directive without any regard for legislative checks and balances, or local input.

Albany, N.Y., June 8—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and members of the Senate and Assembly Republican conferences have introduced a Concurrent Resolution to revoke the COVID-19 declared state of emergency in New York State and bring an end to Governor Andrew Cuomo's unilateral emergency executive powers.

O'Mara highlighted the ongoing controversy and confusion surrounding the Cuomo's administration's continued mask mandate for children in schools as the latest proof that

O'Mara said, "There is absolutely no reason why children need to be wearing masks all day long in school. It's ridiculous. It's the latest arbitrary, non-scientific, non-sensible mandate coming out of a Cuomo administration focused on finding any reason to keep exerting total control."

Under current rules, the Legislature can only rescind Cuomo's pandemic emergency powers, or repeal any specific emergency executive order issued by the governor, through a Concurrent Resolution approved by both houses of the Legislature.

O'Mara, who co-sponsors the latest resolution to end Cuomo's emergency powers, said, "We will not stop fighting to restore legislative checks and balances in New York State government. Endless executive orders have failed and keep failing New York's local communities, families, economies, and workers. It's unthinkable that the Albany Democrats continue to let Governor Cuomo sit in Albany, exert total control, and issue directive after directive without any regard for legislative checks and balances, or local input. The so-called repeal action by the Legislature's Democrat supermajorities back in March was nothing more than a smokescreen to allow the continuation of government by Cuomo executive order. It has to end. It is long past time for the Legislature to go all-in on ending Cuomo's unilateral powers, restore local decision-making, and get fully on board with a safe, practical, sensible, and badly needed reopening of our local communities and economies."

Since the onset of the pandemic over a year ago, when Cuomo was first granted the emergency authorization, the governor has issued nearly 100 Executive Orders that have allowed him to unilaterally change hundreds of state laws, as well as implement rules and regulations, and make spending decisions, without legislative approval.

Many of the governor's actions, O'Mara said, have now gone well beyond the necessary scope of the COVID-19 response.

O'Mara and his Senate Republican colleagues first introduced legislation in May 2020 that would have immediately ended the governor's powers. Their legislative amendments would have put New York's disaster emergency control policy in line with other states that limit an Executive's powers to 30 days and require legislative approval for extending them.

Over the past 15 months, O'Mara and his Senate GOP colleagues have advanced more than 50 motions on the Senate floor to execute a straight-out repeal of the governor's emergency pandemic powers.

Every single one of the Senate Republican motions was rejected by the Senate Democrat majority.