



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## Senator Michelle Hinchey's Bill to Connect Unemployed New Yorkers with Food, Rent, and Utility Support Signed into Law

MICHELLE HINCHEY July 20, 2021

| ISSUE: **UNEMPLOYMENT, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, COVID-19**



**ALBANY, NY** – Today, State Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) announced that her bill to connect New Yorkers to additional state support when applying for unemployment has been signed into law by the Governor. The legislation ([S.5490-B/A.6337-B](#)) requires the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) to provide individuals filing or certifying an unemployment claim with additional information on rental, mortgage, food, and utility assistance. The DOL is charged with sharing this information as part of the online claims process so that each time a person utilizes the website portal they can review the variety of

additional state assistance programs available, including information on the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#), [Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(ERAP\)](#), [Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\)](#), and mortgage relief through the [COVID-19 Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2020](#).

“When a person loses their job, they often need additional assistance to help keep a roof over their head, the lights on, and food on the table. Instead of making New Yorkers scour the internet for the range of state programs that provide these essentials, we need to make it easier for people to access the full scope of funding available to them in one easily accessible spot,” said **Senator Michelle Hinchey**. “This legislation ensures that any New Yorker who files an unemployment claim will also have the opportunity to review information on a variety of other state funding programs that can help with rent, mortgage, food, and utilities — right there on the DOL’s unemployment portal. I am proud to sponsor this common-sense legislation to streamline the sharing of this vital information for New Yorkers who have fallen on hard times and pleased that my team and I can now inform constituents about this upcoming change.”

**Assemblymember Aileen Gunther, who sponsors the companion bill in the Assembly** said, “I am thrilled to see that Governor Cuomo has signed bill A6337-B into law. The bill requires the Department of Labor to provide links on its website to rental, mortgage, food and utility assistance programs. The pandemic has placed New Yorkers in difficult positions, many relying on unemployment and other state programs for assistance for the first time. My office assisted hundreds of people navigating the unemployment system, and many of them would benefit from other state programs. Therefore, assisting them with additional information on programs such as HEAP, SNAP, and ERAP, can help New Yorkers stay warm, fed, and in their homes. I was proud to work with Senator Hinchey on this legislation and to help New Yorkers in a time of need.”

At the height of the pandemic, New York's unemployment rate soared to 16% as some businesses trimmed their workforce and others shuttered altogether. The most recent figures, provided by the New York State Department of Labor, show an improvement of 7.7% statewide. The number of unemployed New Yorkers decreased by 12,100, from 738,500 in May to 726,400 in June 2021.

To date, Hinchey's office has helped over 150 constituents across Albany, Greene, Montgomery, Schenectady, and Ulster Counties access their unemployment benefits. For assistance with unemployment or any other issue where the Senator's office may be helpful, constituents can call (845) 331-3810 to speak with a constituent services representative or email Senator Hinchey at [hinchey@nysenate.gov](mailto:hinchey@nysenate.gov). Assistance is available in English and Spanish.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2021-S5490B**

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires the commissioner of labor to provide notice to unemployment applicants of rental, mortgage, food and utility assistance programs available

March 09, 2021

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Michelle Hinchey**

Do you support this bill?