



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy A. Cooney

Senator Cooney Chairs Inaugural Cities II Committee Hearing Focused on Upstate Cities

JEREMY A. COONEY November 17, 2021

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(ALBANY, NY) - Today, **Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester)** chaired the first hearing of the New York State Senate Cities II Committee. The hearing was held following Senator Cooney's bipartisan Rengener8 Cities Tour earlier this fall. Written and verbal testimony was presented by elected officials, nonprofit leaders, school district leadership, and business community members from small and mid-sized cities across New York including upstate.

The hearing's purpose was to provide committee members with the opportunity to hear directly from stakeholders in cities outside of New York City regarding both the challenges they face and the innovative policies they have developed.

The Regener8 Cities tour focused on listening to the experiences of families, educators, business leaders, and municipal officials in eight cities: Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Plattsburgh, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Yonkers. The objective of the tour was to identify solutions to systemic issues that face families in eight of the largest cities in the state outside of New York City.

A legislative agenda dedicated to addressing the unique problems facing cities outside of NYC will be introduced to the committee during future legislative sessions. The committee will continue its work to support cities outside of New York to ensure small to midsize cities have the opportunity to grow.

Senator Jeremy Cooney, Cities II Committee Chair:

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The Regener8 Tour confirmed that while our cities are facing complex challenges including poverty, housing, and educational inequality, they are also leading the charge toward progress through innovative solutions. I am honored to host the first ever Cities II Committee hearing and to be joined by so many who are invested in the success of our communities. We must be intentional in how we work together to take action for the cities outside of NYC. This committee looks forward to continued partnership with local governments as we seek to combat these issues across New York State.”

Senator Neil Breslin, Cities II Committee Member:

“I was happy that Senator Cooney began his Regener8 Cities Tour in my district in September, where I proudly represent five cities. Mid-size and small cities have unique

problems such as the need to address poverty and an aging infrastructure. The statewide tour is concluding with the hearing today, and I am eager to hear what problems we can solve through legislative and budgetary solutions as a Cities 2 Committee.”

Senator Joseph Griffo, Cities II Committee Member:

"This hearing is a good follow up to the statewide listening sessions that were held earlier this year. It affords us the important opportunity to further interact with officials and to identify the best approaches to address issues, deliver resources and get results for cities across New York."

Senator Rachel May, Cities II Committee Member:

“It’s exciting to be able to participate in the first hearing of the Cities 2 Committee. I thank Senator Cooney for hosting this critical event. I was excited to get the chance to dive deep into how we can eliminate poverty, reduce segregation, improve our housing conditions and transportation systems, and unleash our cities’ full potential. I look forward to building upon this important work with Senator Cooney and other members of the committee.”

Senator Shelley Mayer, Cities II Committee Member:

“Aging infrastructure, workforce development and downtown revitalization are common challenges in our cities, including the four I represent – New Rochelle, Rye, White Plains and Yonkers. Thank you to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for creating the Cities 2 Committee to give our cities outside of New York City the attention they deserve. I applaud Senator Jeremy Cooney for traveling across the state, including to Yonkers, to identify these issues.”

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