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Statement from Senator Helming

“After our aggressive advocacy efforts last week, the NYS Department of Health recently released data regarding nursing homes on a facility by facility basis if they have had MORE than five COVID-19 related deaths. The Department also released nursing home data on a county by county basis for counties that have residents that have been diagnosed with COVID-19. This begs the question, where is the rest of the information?

Governor Cuomo himself stated that nursing homes have become Ground Zero for COVID-19, making it clear that the need for transparency is more important than ever. Non COVID-19 related health and safety information is available for each facility and this information should be no different. The Department of Health must provide COVID-19 related nursing home data for all facilities. This information is absolutely critical as we work to mitigate COVID-19 and protect our most vulnerable populations. Again, I call on the State to immediately produce this information.

Additionally, nursing homes should be communicating important information with the families of residents regardless of whether or not it is a state mandate. Many of us have limited information as it has been several weeks since we have been able to visit our loved ones. I applaud those facilities that are utilizing technology like Facetime and Zoom to connect families and urge all nursing home facilities to take necessary steps to keep the lines of communication open.”

The NYS Department of Health Nursing Home hotline number is 1-888-201-4563.

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