

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Helming: End the Curfew on Restaurants and Bars! End the Governor's Emergency Powers!

Governor issued Executive Order extending 11 p.m. curfew until May 6

Senator Pam Helming and her Senate Republican colleagues are continuing the fight for New York's restaurants and bars after the Governor extended the 11 p.m. curfew until May 6, in addition to the rule mandating that customers purchase food with alcohol. Senator Helming said this latest extension of an Executive mandate – made without transparency by the Governor or Legislative Majorities – clearly shows the Senate Democrats' bill to repeal the Governor's emergency powers did nothing of the sort.

"Enough is enough. This curfew is arbitrary and unscientific. It's hurting our local restaurants and bars, which are essential to our downtown business districts and the economic livelihood of our communities. Many of these small businesses have closed and too many others continue to struggle under the state's onerous restrictions. The curfew has been lifted for other small businesses. It must also be lifted for restaurants and bars," said Senator Helming.

Senator Helming has led the fight to repeal the Governor's emergency powers, authoring a bill that she and her Republican colleagues have brought to the Senate floor 35 times. Each time, Senate Democrats have rejected this effort to restore the Legislature's lawful role.

"This latest mandate is more proof that we need to end the Governor's emergency powers, which are crippling our small businesses and delaying our economic recovery," said Senator Helming.

Under the emergency powers bill passed by the Senate and Assembly Majorities last month, directives already made by the Governor remain in effect. The Governor maintains the ability to modify or extend his directives by giving five days' notice to the Legislative Majorities, not Republicans or the businesses, communities and public impacted by the Governor's unilateral decisions.

Senator Helming and Senate Republicans previously introduced a resolution (J541) to rescind the Governor's 11 p.m. curfew for bars and restaurants as well as a resolution (B477) to rescind the mandate that prohibits bars and restaurants from serving alcoholic beverages to customers who do not order food. The resolutions have yet to be taken up by Senate Democrats.

"My district is a popular tourism destination and we are nearing peak tourism season. As more people get vaccinated, they are traveling and looking for places to stay, eat and shop. We should be doing everything possible to support our restaurant and hospitality businesses. Instead, the Governor and Senate Democrats are doing everything possible to hold them back," said Senator Helming.

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