

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming's Statement on the Governor's Most Recent Executive Order to Seize Ventilators and PPE

This is a step too far. Many of our rural upstate county health departments have not even received an adequate supply of test kits. At this time, we do not have the complete picture and cannot predict with certainty what the real needs will be in upstate New York as COVID-19 spreads. In our rural communities, people are being told to stay home. No one knows what the actual count of those with COVID-19 and those that will get it is. To take ventilators and ship them downstate when we don't even know how many local people are truly sick is irresponsible. We need to do everything we can to save the lives of ALL people, across the State of New York.

Taking ventilators and PPE from upstate hospitals that are already short will not accomplish that goal. Every hospital must have the tools they need to serve their own patients. To go into hospitals and private businesses and seize medical equipment puts everyone at risk and sets an incredibly dangerous precedent. The State of New York needs to work with all our hospitals to get the resources to the right places, while ensuring they have what they need to take care of their own patients. Sending in the National Guard to collect ventilators from upstate hospitals that are already short, and bring them downstate is just wrong on every level.

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