

**Ranking Minority Member:**

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Mental Health

**Committees:**

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Finance

New York City Education

**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**JAMES N. TEDISCO  
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March 15, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
U.S. Senate Majority Leader  
Leo O'Brien Federal Office Building,  
Room 827  
Albany, NY 12207

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
U.S. Senate  
Leo O'Brien Federal Office Building,  
Room 821  
Albany, NY 12207

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
19 Dove Street, Unit 302  
Albany, NY 12210

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer, Senator Gillibrand and Congressman Tonko:

I am respectfully writing you regarding the plight of more than 1,100 former dedicated health care professionals who worked for the now closed St. Clare's Hospital in Schenectady and have seen their pensions significantly reduced or outright eliminated.

As you may know, St. Clare's Hospital was closed 12 years ago by a requirement of the state's Berger Commission in its mission to right-size New York's health care facilities and its operations were absorbed by Ellis Medicine. At the time, the state paid \$58.7 million to St. Clare's in a good faith attempt to cover transition costs including \$28 million to cover the anticipated needs of the St. Clare's Pension Fund. Unfortunately, for reasons that are being investigated by New York's Attorney General, that was not enough to cover the fund's pension costs. Since federal law permits a religious exemption, St. Clare's pension fund has no benefit guarantee insurance.

In some cases, people who worked at the hospital for decades will receive no pension at all. These individuals worked hard with the promise that their pensions would be there when they retired.

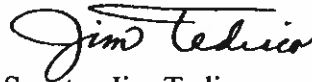
I, several of my colleagues, and the pensioners' association have contacted Governor Cuomo numerous times over the past two years on this issue. Sadly, he has steadfastly refused to discuss the matter with us or help.

Given the \$86 billion carve-out you created to help the Teamsters secure their pension fund in the \$1.9 trillion federal stimulus relief bill, I urge you to now do the same for our St. Clare's Hospital pensioners. I find it a serious omission to not include a miniscule fraction of that stimulus relief to help our hospital workers who have had the rug pulled out from under them.

Even before the pandemic started, these 1,100 New Yorkers, who cared for some of the most vulnerable, have been coping with economic uncertainty and desperation with no end in sight as their pensions evaporated in the snap of a finger through no fault of their own.

I hope you can reconsider this issue and work quickly to help relieve our shared constituents, the 1,100 St. Clare's pensioners, just as you rightly did for our Teamsters. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Tedisco". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish over the "i" in "Tedisco".

Senator Jim Tedisco

Cc. Governor Andrew Cuomo  
Attorney General Letitia James