Senate & Assembly Republicans: End the Disaster Emergency Declaration

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ALBANY, NY -- Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt, Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay and members of their respective conferences today announced the introduction of a concurrent resolution that would terminate the state disaster emergency declared by Governor Cuomo on March 7, 2020 under Executive Order 202 and finally revoke his unilateral decision-making authority.

"We are in the last week of the legislative session, and the majorities in the Legislature are content to leave Albany and let the scandal-engulfed Governor have total control over every aspect of New Yorkers' lives. We have repeatedly advanced an amendment to strip the Governor of his emergency powers and the Democrats unanimously reject it, despite it being clear that their sham repeal bill passed in March did nothing. Today, we have joined the Assembly to introduce a concurrent resolution that would terminate the state disaster emergency and remove the governor's unilateral control once and for all," said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.

"We are in a state of recovery – not emergency – and it's time New Yorkers are able to return to their daily routines and a sense of normalcy. The process has been long. Many lessons have been painful, but it's time to finally move forward. Fortunately, the state's COVID infection rate is reaching its lowest levels while the number of vaccinations steadily increases. The virus is no longer stressing the limits of our health care system. We've made great progress fighting back against the virus and restrictions have been loosening for months. While there is still work to do and goals to achieve, New York State doesn't need to operate under a state of emergency to get there," said Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay.

"By extending his emergency powers indefinitely, Democrats handed the Governor a tool for his political survival and he has used it to his full advantage. Nearly every week he hosts a shameless photo op to announce the loosening of one restriction or another, which has helped perpetuate a 'business as usual' narrative and distract from the multiple scandals and investigations that he is facing. Before we adjourn, Democrats have a responsibility to end this charade," said Senator George Borrello, the Senate Sponsor of the resolution.

"New Yorkers have come a long way in our battle against the COVID-19 pandemic since Gov. Cuomo declared a state disaster emergency in March 2020. We've socially distanced, we've worn masks, we've put off visits with friends and family and more than 19 million vaccine doses have been administered across the state. Our state has been operating under an emergency declaration for fifteen months today. State law grants the Legislature the authority to terminate – at any time – a state disaster emergency by concurrent resolution, and I stand here with my colleagues today to say, 'enough is enough.' It is time to return checks and balances back to our state government and return local control and authority back to our local municipalities and school districts. Democrats in Albany must take meaningful action to revoke the governor's Executive Order once and for all," said Assemblyman Phil Palmesano.

At the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, under the emergency declaration, Governor Cuomo was given broad emergency powers to issue directives and suspend and modify statutes, local laws, ordinances rules and regulations in order to handle the state's pandemic response.

While the original order was set to expire on April 30 this year, Legislative Democrats effectively extended it indefinitely under legislation - negotiated with the Governor - that they claimed would rescind the Governor's powers, but instead actually extended them until the end of the declared disaster emergency.

Most other states have ended, or have a plan to end, their state's declared disaster emergencies.

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