



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

Senator Webb Votes to Clear Unemployment Insurance Debt and Uplift NY Small Businesses in Banner Legislative Session

LEA WEBB August 8, 2025

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(Southern Tier, NY)- As small business owners and main streets throughout New York continue to bear the affordability crisis, Senator Lea Webb (SD-52) proudly delivered critical, high priority wins for the business community in her third legislative session representing the Southern Tier. Key accomplishments include voting to clear the \$8 billion in Unemployment Insurance Debt that New York State owed to the federal government, in turn eliminating the fees, taxes, and interest rates that small business owners pay every year towards the fund and saving them an average \$100 per employee in 2026, and \$250 per employee in 2027. In this year's budget the Senate also modernized the law on frequency of pay violations in order to shield unwitting small businesses from crushing legal fees.

In voting for this year's budget, Senator Webb further moved to extend the State's MWBE Enterprise Program for an additional two years and increase the Discretionary Procurement Threshold for MWBEs and service-disabled Veteran-owned businesses to \$1.5 million, helping make these entities more competitive.

Locally, Senator Webb proudly fought to deliver \$50,000 each to the Greater Binghamton, Cortland Area, and Tompkins County Chambers of Commerce so they can continue to

support our very own business owners

“As someone who understands how vital small businesses are to the fabric of our communities, I was proud to vote this year for a State budget and related legislation that eases their financial burdens, supports our local entrepreneurs, and strengthens our regional economy,” said **Senator Lea Webb**. “From clearing the Federal Unemployment Insurance Debt, to delivering thousands of dollars to our local Chambers of Commerce, I was proud to help lead comprehensive wins for our small businesses at every level. These advancements will provide real relief for business owners, helping them reinvest in their operations, hire more workers, and grow right here in New York.”

Over the course of the 2025 legislative session, Senator Webb also helped advance legislation to ease regulatory burdens on small businesses, lower operational costs, and help make it easier for them to thrive in our state. This included:

- Co-sponsoring a bill giving MWBs more time to cure certification errors, and voting for legislation that would provide them with explanations for bid rejection so they can better secure future contracts ([S6020](#)) ([S5149](#))
- Helping businesses navigate and comply with state regulations through the creation of a small business compliance guide and small business regulatory nexus ([S7332](#), [S6023](#))
- Creating a small business energy assistance and advocacy program to keep utility costs down ([S6484A](#))

Senator Webb’s accomplishments throughout the 2025 session will help bolster our downtown economies and support ground up growth that everyone can benefit and prosper from.

Said Bob Haight, President & CEO of the Cortland Area Chamber of Commerce, “Senator Webb has again shown she listens and responds to our business community. The relief of the Unemployment Insurance burden and the practical matter of handling employers with pay violations are both common sense items that will positively impact business. Her support of our local Chambers of Commerce will allow us to further our offerings to our businesses, 90% of which are small businesses. We applaud and thank the Senator for her support.”

“Small businesses are the lifeblood of a thriving Downtown economy and require the determined partnership of public and private partners to support and sustain the conditions that enable their success,” **said Nan Rohrer, CEO of Downtown Ithaca Alliance.** “We are grateful to Senator Webb for her commitment to New York’s small business sector and for meaningful actions that she initiated during the legislative session to not only provide tax relief but to incentivize small business owners to further invest in our communities, and in Downtown Ithaca especially.”

Said Mina Federman, Government Relations & Public Policy Director at Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce, “Small businesses are still navigating significant economic uncertainty, making long-term growth and planning increasingly challenging. We sincerely appreciate Senator Lea Webb’s leadership in addressing the UI trust fund balance and her commitment to shielding small businesses from unwarranted legal burdens.”

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