



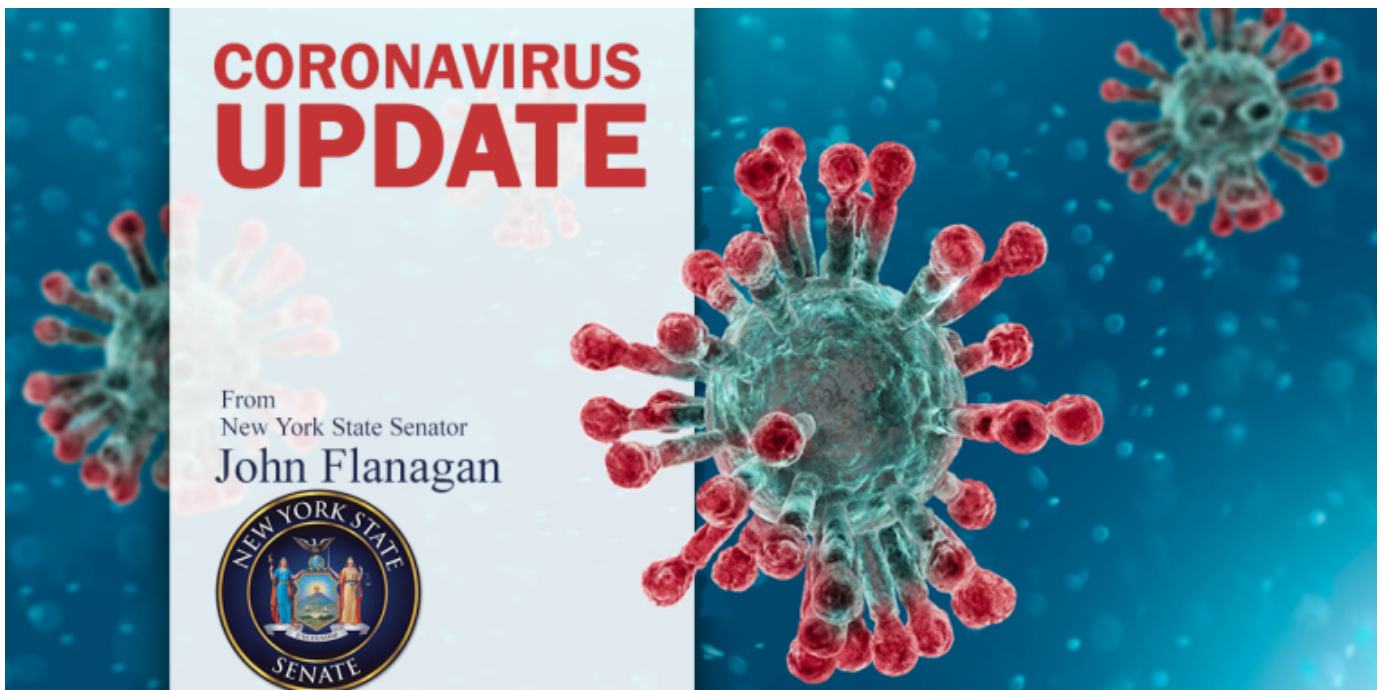
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senate Republican Conference Sends Governor Cuomo COVID-19 Bipartisan Action Plan

JOHN J. FLANAGAN March 20, 2020

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New York State Senate Republican Leader John J. Flanagan and members of the State Senate Republican Conference today sent New York Governor Andrew Cuomo a COVID—19 Action Plan that includes a wide range of immediate bipartisan steps the state can take to protect New Yorkers at a time of crisis.

“We appreciate Governor Cuomo keeping the public fully informed and working in a bipartisan manner on the coronavirus crisis. The Senate Republican Conference is ready to

work and to serve every New Yorker now facing uncertainty because of these times, and we have developed a COVID—19 Action Plan to tackle the difficult issues ahead. We must support our healthcare workers, our hospitals, our small businesses, our workers, and every single New Yorker impacted by this crisis through actions that we can take together at this unprecedented time,” said Senate Republican Leader Flanagan.

The COVID—19 Action Plan:

Health

- Allow physicians who are licensed and in good standing in other states to practice in New York. In the event that there is a shortage (or need), New York should waive any in-state licensing requirements for these physicians to practice during the crisis;
- Allow Nurse Practitioners to practice in an unrestricted fashion;
- Establish a direct line for medical professionals to refer questions to the Department of Health;
- In the event that there are school districts that are still unable to set up a physical location where students can pick up meals that they traditionally obtain from school, the districts should be allowed/encouraged to have meals delivered; and
- Establish a threat level assessment tool to indicate to affected communities the level of threat their community is currently experiencing. This would be akin to the threat level system implemented after the events of 9/11.

Jobs, Taxes, and the Economy

Taxes

- Accelerate the Middle Class Tax Cuts to provide relief to individuals and small businesses; and
- Provide a tax credit for paying workers who aren't working -- 25% credit for additional sick time or any sick leave, vacation, or furlough that the business was not paying before.

Small Businesses Across the State

- Extend by 90 days the payment of monthly sales tax;
- Make available no-interest loans immediately to entities that face a dramatic decrease in business;
- Eliminate penalties for late payments of business and property taxes;
- Extend the cure period for various violations facing businesses during the crisis;
- Expand STAR for small businesses and accelerate tax cuts for small businesses;
- Have ESD create a hotline to connect businesses to capital and interim assistance;
- Issue Economic Injury Disaster Declaration -- allows small businesses access to SBA (small business administration);
- Call upon private industry to redirect existing resources to develop necessary products to fight the virus (masks, gloves, gowns, ventilators, etc.); and
- Reimburse for additional costs associated with expansion of paid sick/family leave.

Restaurants, Bars and Other Food Establishments

- Prevent price gouging by implementing delivery fee caps. While our restaurants and food establishments are still permitted to have food delivered, food delivery apps and others should not take advantage of the unfolding situation; and
- Extend the window for restaurants to make payments on COVID-19 related costs they are incurring.

Higher Education

- Ensure the SUNY/CUNY reimbursement plan for families is immediate and includes room and board as well any fees the students were charged by the campus.

Medicaid

- Work to provide local tax relief with any supplemental Medicaid funds provided by the Federal Government in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Plastic Bags

- Temporarily suspend New York's plastic bag ban in grocery stores for the safety of consumers, similar to the actions of Maine in delaying their plastic bag ban.

Consumer Protection

- Waive late fees and cancellation fees for consumer goods and services due to the COVID-19 outbreak, including gym memberships, cell phone plans, and any other nonessential quality of life items;
- Mandate grocery stores, pharmacies, and other essential businesses provide specified hours for vulnerable populations; and

- Expand the EDC budget for advertising, to encourage New Yorkers to buy local to support local stores and farmers.

Insurance

- For mandated closures the State should provide the cost of additional unemployment insurance rate increases;
- Relax, suspend, or repeal DFS regulations to encourage the expansion and affordability of business interruption insurance; and
- Relax, suspend, or repeal DFS & DOH regulations to promote the delivery of health care services over virtual platforms, including tele-health.