



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

3.30.20 - Joint Letter to Governor Cuomo from Senator Fred Akshar, Broome County Executive Jason Garnar, Tioga County Legislative Chairwoman Marte Sauerbrey, Broome County Legislative Chair Dan Reynolds and Binghamton Mayor Rich David

FRED AKSHAR March 30, 2020

| ISSUE: COVID-19, CORONAVIRUS



Statement from Senator Fred Akshar

"This week, Governor Cuomo extended his order that residents across our great state 'Stay Home, Stop the Spread and Save Lives.'

We must all do our part to curtail the spread of COVID-19, and non-essential mass transit between cities should not be exempt from our efforts.

Today I joined Broome County Executive Jason Garnar, Broome County Legislative Chair Dan Reynolds, Binghamton Mayor Rich David and Tioga County Legislative Chair Martha Sauerbrey to publicly call on Governor Cuomo to follow his own advice and enforce his orders to help prevent the unnecessary travel of individuals throughout New York and beyond. If he continues to avoid this issue, he should at least consider giving localities the power to shut down busses, hospitality bookings and limit travel to their counties.

The state and the federal government have done a remarkable job of setting up beds and providing resources to the hardest hit areas of the state and every effort should be made to encourage residents to remain in those areas.

This isn't about shuttering our communities to our fellow New Yorkers, this is about stopping the spread of a highly communicable disease beyond the most severely effected areas.

The message from top to bottom must be clear: no one from any part of the state should be engaging in non-essential travel right now. Every New Yorker needs to do their part to flatten the curve and take the pressure off our increasingly overwhelmed health care system."

To read the letter, [click here](#).

Full text below:

March 30, 2020

*The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
New York State Capitol
Albany, NY 12247*

Dear Governor Cuomo:

First, let us convey our continued appreciation for the hard work you and your team are doing during this public health crisis. Your daily briefings have been informative and have benefited our collective constituency.

In a recent interview, we were concerned by your response when asked about Upstate county governments

urging downstate residents to not travel to Upstate communities during this pandemic. You stated: "I don't like it socially or culturally, I don't like what it says of us as one state." In our humble opinion, that statement is not based on facts nor on data, it's based on feeling, which is the exact opposite approach that you've publicly championed in dealing with this crisis. Upstate counties have been reiterating your message to "Stay Home, Stop the Spread and Save Lives."

We have heard from many of our constituents that there's been a disproportionate amount of travel from areas severely impacted by COVID-19 to our Upstate communities. As you and health experts you've relied on have said, we must be proactive in stopping the spread of this virus and minimizing the strain on our healthcare system. Why should non-essential mass transit between cities be exempt from our efforts?

To be clear, we're not talking about those in hospitals, their families, or health care and EMS personnel. We are speaking specifically to those who simply want a "safe" area to ride out this pandemic. We are not suggesting that you should shut down the highways or barricade New York City. Our suggestion is to reiterate your message to Stay Home, Stop the Spread and Save Lives and help enforce the Executive Orders you've put forth. If you won't address this issue, at least consider giving localities the power to shut down busses, hospitality bookings and limit travel to their counties.

This isn't about shuttering our communities to our fellow New Yorkers, this is about stopping the spread of a highly communicable disease beyond the most severely affected areas. It's about preventing our health care systems from being overwhelmed with cases. The state and the federal government have done a remarkable job of setting up beds and providing resources to the hardest hit areas of the state and every effort should be made to encourage residents to remain in those areas.

The message must be clear: no one from any part of the state should be engaging in non-essential travel right now. Every New Yorker needs to do their part to flatten the curve and take the pressure off our increasingly overwhelmed health care system.

Stay healthy, wishing you and your team all the best,

*Frederick J. Akshar II
52nd Senate District*

*Jason T. Garnar
Broome County Executive*

Martha Sauerbrey

Tioga County Legislative Chair

Daniel J. Reynolds

Chairman, Broome County Legislature

Richard C. David

Mayor of Binghamton