



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward, Senate Republicans Call for Regional Reopening

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR April 22, 2020

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; COVID-19; UNEMPLOYMENT**



ONEONTA, 04/22/20 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today joined with members of the Senate Republican Conference in calling on Governor Cuomo -- who finally heard their calls to begin a responsible, regional re-opening of New York -- to provide data within a week on which of the state's economic regions meet the CDC's Phase 1 standards to restart business.

These assessments must be released to the public so that parts of the state can begin to recover from the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic in a safe way.

Governor Cuomo must include the state Department of Health, local departments of health, local officials, local businesses, and industry leaders in this process.

“I know full well the seriousness of the Coronavirus and respect and appreciate the essential workers who continue to give of themselves every day,” said Senator Seward. **“As New York State prepares to comeback from this pandemic, we need to balance smart health policies that adhere to CDC guidelines with help for our small businesses and so many individuals that have been sacrificing for the good of all.**

“A commonsense regional approach, carefully considering health statistics, should be utilized as we turn the corner and re-open our economy. We can and should keep public health at the forefront as New York makes informed decisions during this crucial period. However, we need to start taking steps to bring businesses back online in a safe manner.”

While the governor allows the experts to work on the data, he must also take on the state’s broken unemployment system. Over 1.2 million New Yorkers filed for unemployment as of April 16 and despite the voluntary efforts of state workers to handle the unprecedented volume of calls, unemployed New Yorkers cannot get through to the agency, have not received call-backs, and have not received needed checks.

The governor on Tuesday embraced Senate Republicans’ calls and President Trump’s [**Opening Up America Again Guidelines**](#), endorsed by Doctors Fauci, Birx and Redfield, which creates three phases for safely opening the economy. Each phase contains gating criteria and instructions for individuals and employers to maintain safety both in and out of the workplace.

The impact of the Coronavirus has varied widely across the state. Only 7 percent of statewide Coronavirus hospitalizations are within areas outside of New York City and its suburbs. The governor’s regional assessments should consider cities separately from less dense populations within economic regions.

