



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

Senators Metzger and Skoufis Urge NYS Education Officials to Prepare to Adapt Graduation Ceremonies for COVID-19

JEN METZGER May 1, 2020

| ISSUE: **COVID-19, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, ADAPTED GRADUATION CEREMONIES**

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Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...State Senators Jen Metzger (SD-42) and James Skoufis (SD-39) are urging the New York State Education Department and the New York State Board of Regents to provide guidance to local school districts regarding graduation ceremony alternatives for the class of 2020 since Governor Andrew Cuomo has called for schools to remain closed for the remainder of the school year.

In a joint letter sent Monday, in anticipation of this determination by the Governor, the lawmakers illustrated how significant and important a milestone high school graduation is for students and their families, and elevated a suggestion from a local school administrator to move forward with safe ceremonies adapted for the COVID-19 era. The letter to Ms. Shannon Tahoe, Interim Commissioner of Education, is attached.

Senator Metzger said, "Graduating from high school is a major milestone in the life of a young person, and our high school seniors deserve to be honored whatever the circumstances come graduation day. As with so many other challenges during this pandemic, we have to plan ahead and get creative."

Senator Skoufis said, "This virus has taken so much from so many: loved ones, jobs, health, time, and the ability to celebrate together. We must be innovative in developing ways for our community to continue moving forward with traditions that are safe and still allow us to recognize important milestones. These students have worked so hard and I hope we can work together with the state to find a solution to honor them."

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