



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

## Senator Andrew Gounardes, Councilmember Justin Brannan, Assemblymember Peter Abbate and Brooklyn Chamber CEO Randy Peers Join Local Business Owners to Demand Continuation of Commercial Eviction Moratorium and Small Business Relief

ANDREW GOUNARDES August 17, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATOR ANDREW GOUNARDES, CORONAVIRUS; COVID-19; SMALL BUSINESS**



**Brooklyn, NY** - State Senator Andrew Gounardes, Assemblyman Peter Abbate, Councilman Justin Brannan, Brooklyn Chamber CEO Randy Peers joined local business owners including Abdulilah Esa of Galaxy Comics, a local business that has been struggling due to the pandemic, to demand that the Governor continue the suspension of

commercial evictions and that the state pass real relief for suffering small businesses.

Certain commercial evictions will be able to move forward beginning on August 20th while the executive order protecting other local businesses from commercial evictions expires on September 4th. While the Tenant Safe Harbor Act protects residential tenants with a COVID hardship from being evicted, no similar ongoing protections exist for small businesses who make up the economic engine of our city. The coalition will also call for the passage of existing legislation including [S.8211A](#) to bail out struggling small businesses.

A recent [survey](#) released by the Brooklyn Chamber in July showed that more than half of Brooklyn small businesses were struggling to remain open, with rent as an almost universal challenge. Another recent [report](#) released by the Partnership for New York City estimated that up to one third of small businesses could close permanently due to COVID.

“Without small businesses, our city’s economy doesn’t run. The jobs that we are relying on to power our recovery will disappear, and the businesses that make up the culture and character of our neighborhoods will be gone. The Senate has left Washington without providing COVID relief, so it is up to us in New York to take decisive action to prevent the widespread closure of our small businesses. Together, we can save our small businesses and show that New York City is coming back stronger than ever,” said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes**.

"It is my hope that landlords of commercial establishments and small businesses work together during these challenging times. Many shopkeepers and landlords in our community are neighbors and they are both struggling with an array of financial hardships. We are calling for relief to save our much needed mom and pop shops and their local landlords,” said **Assemblyman Peter J. Abbate, Jr., 49th Assembly District**.

“Our valued small businesses still haven’t gotten the relief that they need, despite being closed for several months, racking up bills and rent, and facing a major economic slowdown. The absolute minimum we can do to give our businesses a fighting chance is to give them more time to square up with their landlords without having to worry about imminent threat of eviction. We need to extend the commercial eviction moratorium, and furthermore, we need to pass real relief for our small businesses, or else we will see the heart and soul of our city be decimated within the next year,” said **Councilmember Justin Brannan**.

"Nobody could have anticipated this pandemic. This is exactly why business owners purchase insurance. We must pass business interruption legislation to ensure that our small businesses are protected and the city's economic engine is ready to fuel New York's recovery," said **Assemblymember Mathilde Frontus**.

“74% of our small businesses indicated they needed some sort of rent relief if they were going to survive COVID's shutdown of the economy" said **Randy Peers, President & CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce**. "Extending the moratorium on evictions for commercial small business tenants is a necessary interim measure to avoid a large-scale scale vacancy crisis along our neighborhood commercial corridors."

“Small businesses like mine are struggling because of coronavirus, and the relief that’s available just isn’t enough. We are counting on our government leaders to act. If they don’t, far too many of us will not be able to stay open. As the owner of a comics shop, I can say that New York needs some heroes right now to save our small businesses and keep our city’s economy alive,” said **Abdulilah Esa, owner of Galaxy Comics**.

"Since we are not getting any federal aid, we need hard working New Yorkers to build a new economy without restrictions. To get out of this crisis, we need less regulations, less fines & less taxes on small businesses. We also need to suspend the commercial eviction moratorium

while we find a relief solution that allows small businesses to stay open," said **Don Lee, Owner of CoffeeRx**.

"Our local government needs to have the courage and (bare minimum) human decency to take care of the most vulnerable among us. Small businesses in varying industries have had to shut down their dreams and are facing homelessness. We must use logic, and be a shining example of how we can be both a compassionate city and an effective one," said local business owner **Daniela VillaRamos, Once Upon A Vow**.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S8211A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relates to requiring certain perils be covered under business interruption insurance during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic

April 17, 2020

In Senate Committee [Insurance](#)

Sponsored by [Andrew Gounardes](#)

Do you support this bill?