



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'MARA NAMED TOP REPUBLICAN MEMBER ON POWERFUL SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE: Will also continue as Ranking Member on Investigations Committee

THOMAS F. O'MARA December 22, 2020

| ISSUE: **NEW YORK STATE BUDGET**



We need to keep working against a New York State tax and regulatory mindset that puts our businesses and manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, imposes red tape that strangles local economies, or prioritizes higher and higher spending, overtaxing, outrageous mandates, and burdensome overregulation.

Elmira, N.Y., December 22—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) has been appointed by Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt as the top Republican member on the Senate Finance

Committee.

Ortt also reappointed O'Mara as the Ranking Member on the Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee, a position O'Mara first received in late July.

O'Mara welcomed the new assignment to the Finance Committee and said he looks forward to having a direct voice on the legislative committee most responsible for overseeing the adoption of the state's annual budget and setting the course for New York's short- and long-term fiscal practices and responsibilities.

O'Mara said, "I appreciate Leader Ortt's confidence in my commitment to representing our Republican Conference on the Finance Committee. Senate Republicans will continue to be a voice for lower taxes, less regulation, greater accountability, economic growth, job creation, and more common sense on state fiscal practices. The Finance Committee directly impacts so many of the key issues facing our localities, from the future of farming and manufacturing to tax relief, regulatory reform and overall Upstate job creation. I welcome the opportunity, at this critical time, for direct input on a range of policy areas that will decide the short- and long-term future and strength of our local communities and economies," said O'Mara, who represents the 58th Senate District is comprised of Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates counties, and a part of Tompkins County (the city and town of Ithaca, and the towns of Enfield, Newfield, and Ulysses).

Throughout his Senate service, O'Mara has been a strong voice in the State Legislature for more responsible and effective state fiscal practices. He has consistently pointed to high taxes, unrestrained spending, unfunded mandates, and overregulation as key obstacles to sustained economic growth and job creation throughout the Upstate region.

O'Mara said, "We need to keep working against a New York State tax and regulatory mindset that puts our businesses and manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, imposes red tape that strangles local economies, or prioritizes higher and higher spending, overtaxing, outrageous mandates, and burdensome overregulation."

In July, when Ortt first named O'Mara as the top Republican member on the Investigations Committee, the Senate and Assembly were preparing to begin public hearings in August on the COVID-19 nursing home crisis.

Significant questions have been raised by O'Mara and many others over the Cuomo administration's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York State's nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities.

O'Mara said that he will urge the Senate Investigations Committee to continue to push for answers from the Cuomo administration on exactly how many nursing homes residents have died from COVID-19, what role state policies played in the crisis, and what steps need to be taken to ensure better protection and safety.

O'Mara said, "Simply settling for the findings of in-house reports on the COVID-19 nursing home crisis from Governor Cuomo's own Department of Health can never be good enough for those who have lost parents, grandparents and other loved ones. The Governor's response to our calls for an independent investigation as 'politically motivated' has been disrespectful to these grieving families. The seniors who have died and their families deserve to have an unbiased and independent inquiry into the actions of the Department of Health, and they should know if any mistakes were made. There is nothing political about uncovering the truth."

O'Mara said that same standard will hold true across the many responsibilities that will

continue to face the Investigations Committee.

“The need for unbiased investigations does not stop at our state’s nursing homes and long-term care facilities. We must have representatives on the Investigations Committee who will seek out the truth on state issues regardless of the specific topic at hand. I appreciate Leader Ortt’s ongoing confidence in my experience, commitment and ability to represent our conference on the Investigations Committee, and I want to reinforce my commitment to getting the answers that New Yorkers rightfully deserve,” O’Mara said.