



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Senator Helming Statement on Start of 2021 Legislative Session

PAMELA HELMING January 6, 2021

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“Happy New Year to my constituents. We enter this new year with many challenges facing New Yorkers and our state. But we also have opportunities to make the best choices for our residents and communities.

“While we continue to fight the pandemic and distribute the vaccine, we must begin our economic recovery. My focus is on reopening our economy and getting people safely back to work. To accomplish this, we must support our small business owners, farmers, manufacturers, and job creators. And we need to do everything possible to preserve vital community services and protect our hardworking taxpayers.

“Yesterday, the Senate Republican Conference announced our Reset New York plan to put the state on the road to economic recovery and future prosperity. This plan reaffirms our commitment to our local economies and communities, and to fiscal responsibility.

“While in Albany, I also received a briefing from Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker on the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. We must distribute the vaccine as quickly as possible to all those who want it, and ensure the vaccine is equally accessible to our residents in rural and medically-underserved areas. I have also reiterated to Dr. Zucker and the Governor that we need to increase testing sites in our rural communities as testing remains

key to reopening businesses, getting people back to work, and keeping children in school.

“Finally, there is an Assembly bill, A416, which is so egregious that I must voice my strong opposition to it. Originally introduced in 2015, it would give the government the ability to detain contagious patients during a state of emergency. This bill is unconstitutional and I would never support it. My constituents should know that the bill has no sponsor in the Senate and no other sponsors in the Assembly, and has been rejected by lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.”

Please see Senator Helming’s Facebook page at [facebook.com/SenatorHelming](https://facebook.com/SenatorHelming) for a recorded video on Assembly bill A416.

Senator Helming has been appointed to serve as Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development, and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Insurance. She will also serve on these additional four committees: Agriculture; Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business; Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation; and Racing, Gaming and Wagering.

On the COVID-19 vaccine, people can visit this state website to see when and where they may be eligible for the vaccine: <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>