



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Senator Michelle Hinchey Advances Legislation To Improve Workplace COVID-19 Safety Standards and Support Workforce

MICHELLE HINCHEY March 3, 2021

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Albany, NY... The State Senate passed a package of bills this week to protect the health and safety of employees and their income amid the pandemic, including legislation co-sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) to guarantee all employees four hours of time off, per dose, to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Another bill advanced by Hinchey and the Senate Majority encourages the use of shared work programs, which provide an alternative to

laying off workers by granting employers a small incentive to retain staff while reducing hours. The package also includes legislation to promote career paths into healthcare and create health and safety standards for airborne infectious diseases in the workplace, among other legislative initiatives.

“Workers are the backbone of New York’s economy and our state needs to be a partner in protecting their safety and advancing opportunities to get people back on the job,” **said Senator Hinchey**. From paid vaccination leave to shared work benefit programs, the legislation we’ve advanced this week makes clear that our state is committed to improving workplace safety and benefits for all who are risking their health and well-being to keep our communities running.”

The legislation passed this week by Senator Hinchey and the Senate Majority include:

- **NY Hero Act:** [S1034A](#) will implement airborne infectious disease standards requiring employers to implement an infectious disease exposure prevention plan.
- **Shared Work Program Petition:** [S17A](#) will allow employees to petition their employer to apply for the shared work program in order to avoid layoffs or to rehire laid-off workers.
- **Vaccination Leave:** [S2588A](#) will grant public and private employees four hours of time off, per dose, to receive the coronavirus vaccine.
- **Healthcare Employment Incentivization:** [S3470](#) will require the New York State Department of Labor and Department of Health to establish a program to incentivize unemployed individuals to enter short-staffed jobs in healthcare by expediting training and certification.
- **Shared Work Program Benefit Extension:** [S4049](#) will increase the amount of unemployment insurance benefits an employee can claim under the shared work program to limits of the

federal maximum.

- **Public Employee Death Benefit:** S4681 will extend previously enacted accidental death benefits to the families of frontline workers who have passed away due to COVID-19.

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