



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Peter Oberacker

Comprehensive Nursing Home Investigation Needed

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ALBANY, 03/25/21 -- State Senator Peter Oberacker (R/C – Schenevus) today along with other lawmakers joined with those who have lost loved ones to mark the one-year anniversary of the state's notorious order that sent COVID-positive patients directly into New York's nursing homes.

“March 25, 2020 changed the course of so many lives and will serve as a sad reminder for the thousands of families who lost loved ones in our state's nursing homes during the COVID pandemic,” said Senator Peter Oberacker. **“Taking time today to honor those who passed away**

alone, without loved ones by their side, was a somber moment. Now we need to stand up and take action on their behalf.”

In conjunction with today’s remembrance, Senator Oberacker joined with his Republican colleagues to send a letter to New York State Comptroller calling on him to make a formal referral to the Attorney General to further investigate potential misconduct by the state regarding the impact of COVID-19 in nursing homes.

“Parents, grandparents, and loved ones are gone and we owe their families real answers. Enough damaging information has already been reported about the directive the governor and the health commissioner issued and we cannot stop investigating until the full story is exposed,” said Senator Oberacker.

The letter written to the comptroller reads in part:

As public servants, we have a duty to ensure that policies in place protect the health and safety of all of our residents, but especially our most vulnerable. As you know, a number of questions have been raised relating to the state’s overall handling of the COVID crisis in New York’s nursing homes and residential healthcare facilities throughout the pandemic. Despite a need to learn from past mistakes and improve state policy accordingly, neither the Governor, nor the Legislature, has engaged in an independent, in-depth review of policies during this time. Worse, widespread news reports indicate there may even have been acts of official misconduct on the part of the Governor’s Administration. To date, the only state government action that has elicited substantial information from the Administration, including a previously unknown number of fatalities, has been as a result of the New York State Attorney General’s independent investigation into and report on the state’s nursing home and adult care facility fatalities. For this reason, we respectfully urge you to make a formal request to the New York State Attorney General to enable her to commence a more in-depth investigation into this matter, as well as for your Office to conduct a formal audit in conjunction with such an investigation.

Additionally, Senator Oberacker is **co-sponsoring a senate resolution (J554)** which would designate March 25th as “We Care” Remembrance Day