



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Sen. Cooney Works to Extend Local Bar & Restaurant Hours

JEREMY COONEY April 16, 2021

| ISSUE: **COVID-19, BAR AND RESTAURANT REOPENING**

(Rochester, NY) - Sen. Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester) called on Governor Cuomo to allow restaurants and bars to operate for extended hours in anticipation of the coming summer months. Outdoor dining is an opportunity for restaurants, many of which are small businesses, to increase revenue as they work to recover from the pandemic. Restaurants across New York have been forced to close, reduce hours, and lay off staff over the last 13 months because of COVID-19. Cooney's request was in response to the Governor's blanket extension of DOH restrictions on the hours of operation for bars and restaurants until May 6, 2021.

"For restaurant owners, their workers and customers, safety is still the top priority during the pandemic and now, as we seek to recover," **said Senator Jeremy Cooney.** "We are confident these establishments will continue to responsibly provide service under DOH and CDC guidelines, including requiring masks and social distancing. Serving a safely seated customer and observing masking will prevent spread—whether at noon or midnight. Additionally, allowing restaurants and bars the flexibility to stay open later will create an economic boost and give them a chance to create more jobs."

Executive Director of Empire State Restaurant and Tavern Association, Scott Wexler

"Our members are appreciative of Sen. Cooney's call to end the curfew on restaurants and

taverns. The announcement that the curfew will be extended to midnight was welcome news, however, after over a year of severe restrictions on the industry, removing the curfew entirely is desperately needed,” **said Scott Wexler, Executive Director of Empire State Restaurant and Tavern Association.** “These establishments have taken extraordinary steps to protect the public health, including making substantial investments in equipment. The industry is able and eager to protect the health of our customers and staff at any time of day or night.”

Local Restaurant Owner Josh Miles

“As a small business owner I am concerned about survival as we recover from the pandemic,” **said Josh Miles, owner of popular eateries, The Revelry, Bitter Honey, and Branca Downtown / President of SCN Hospitality.** “While businesses in the hospitality industry like mine have a long way until we will feel financially stable after months of losses, I fully support any measure that allows business owners to increase and control their hours while also maintaining safety for patrons and staff.”

Local Service Worker, Alexis Taylor

“As someone who earns their income entirely from the service industry, whether I am able to pay my bills is dependent on the number of hours I can work,” **said Alexis Taylor, a local bartender and barber.** “My colleagues and friends in the restaurant industry have struggled over the course of the pandemic, but we are optimistic that outdoor dining and increased access to vaccination will help us recover financially. I applaud Sen. Cooney’s work on behalf of the entire hospitality industry and hope we are able to expand the number of hours we are able to safely serve customers soon.”