



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Takes Action On Executive Orders To Continue Reopening New York State

MICHAEL GIANARIS April 28, 2021

| ISSUE: **SMALL BUSINESS, COVID-19, CORONAVIRUS, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, BARS**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris is taking steps to ease COVID-19 restrictions as New York continues recovering and New Yorkers get vaccinated and regain a sense of normalcy as the state reopens. The repeal of these directives will enhance the quality of life for volunteers, patrons, and business owners.

“When public health guidelines were first put in place, many were needed to save lives and stop the spread of covid-19. Now as we see the light at the end of the tunnel and success in vaccinating more and more people, we need to start taking action to get our small business economy back on track,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I am pleased to work with the great small businesses of western Queens to provide this type of much-needed relief.”

The Senate will move to suspend several executive orders placed by the Governor at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Included in these repeals are food sales in bars and restaurants will no longer be required with alcoholic beverage purchases, in an effort to increase review and transparency of volunteers assisting in COVID-19 operations the Senate Majority restores provisions of the Public Officers Law for volunteers who receive nominal or no compensation, and to formally eliminate vaccination penalties and priority group regulations that slowed down the vaccination process. The Senate Majority will continue to review existing directives that can be removed as session continues.

Senator Gianaris has been working throughout the pandemic with small businesses to provide relief. Notably, he pushed the state to re-open comedy clubs and other small entertainment venues along with the same rules as restaurants. In the recent state budget, Senator Gianaris successfully advocated for \$1 billion in funding.

The Executive Order Directives that will be acted on include:

Repeal of Sale of Food with Alcoholic Beverage Requirement: Food sales will no longer be required for alcoholic beverage sales in bars and restaurants, for on premise or off premise consumption.

Transparency for Individuals Assisting in COVID Operations: Individuals who volunteer to take on significant government work will be treated as Public Officers in order to comply with government disclosure and transparency rules.

Timely and Accurate Administration of Vaccines: Outdated compliance rules for vaccine suppliers, such as full utilization of vaccines on hand within one week or additional paperwork mandates, will be relaxed. This repeal eliminates unnecessary penalties and prioritization rules that slow down the vaccination process and are no longer necessary in light of current vaccination rates and appointment availability.

**Jamie Faye Bean, Executive Director of Sunnyside Shines** said, "Our restaurants and bars have worked hard to maintain compliance with changing mandates throughout the pandemic and to provide essential services to our communities. But the 'food with alcohol' rule was especially arbitrary and disconnected from our understanding of COVID spread and risks. We are happy to see this repealed and appreciate the action of our representatives in making it happen."

**Roseann McSorley, Owner of Katch Astoria** said, "Restaurants and small businesses have been suffering from so many rules related to the Covid situation. It's great that this one has been lifted – we have lost so many customers who sometimes just want to come out for a drink and can't do so."

**Chris LaCass, Save Our Storefronts** said, "I'm looking forward to having a drink at a bar without being forced to order food I rarely eat. It was difficult to watch as Governor Cuomo's arbitrary and often capricious rules destroyed thousands of businesses and countless jobs in NY this past year. We are all grateful to progressive legislators like Senator Gianaris for fighting along side us against the Governor's anti-business executive orders. We see a bright future for small businesses in our state!"