



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Edward A. Rath III

Senator Rath Shares Thoughts on State of Small Business Economy in New York

EDWARD A. RATH III | October 13, 2021

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19; SMALL BUSINESS**

Senator
ED RATH



**Summer
of Small
Business**

As we continue to feel the impact of COVID-19 in our community, it is important we do all we can to support our neighbors. This is especially true when it comes to supporting our local small businesses. Despite ever-changing guidelines and restrictions, I am proud to have had the opportunity to visit so many small businesses across our region this summer to learn their stories and listen to their concerns and priorities.

It was truly the summer of the small business. From juice bars to family farms, to drainage and specialty metal companies, all these enterprises and their employees continue to be the backbone of our economy and community.

Throughout the 2021 Legislative Session, I proposed bills and solutions that prioritize small businesses. State government must ensure that they could remain viable at a time when they were forced to limit capacity and, in some cases, shut down, through no fault of their own. I am proud that my first bill, establishing the Small Business Recovery Grant Program, was included in the budget.

I'm also proud to have introduced creative proposals to get people back to work and address labor shortages. Perhaps no industry has been hit harder by the pandemic than our restaurants. It is hard to imagine that despite, higher wages and even signing bonuses, many restaurants are still operating with reduced hours and open only select days of the week.

Governor Hochul and the Department of Health owe it to residents to establish clear metrics and guidelines that provide a path forward. Under the previous administration, one of the biggest complaints I heard was the sense that the goalposts were constantly moving and science took a back seat to political expediency. While I recognize that no solution will appease everyone, more needs to be done to foster trust and inclusion in the process.

Now, more than ever, it is critical that government removes the regulatory barriers that stifle business success. We should encourage growth and not discourage investment in our communities. New York State must learn from the mistakes of our past and make a commitment to transparency and rebuilding public trust. Rebuilding our economy requires effectively communicating guidelines and working with stakeholders to ensure that their voice is heard and respected.

I will continue to do all I can to advocate for our community and small businesses. I hope everyone will take a moment to support one of the many outstanding local businesses in our community.