



New York State Senator
DAPHNE JORDAN
(R, C, IP, REF) 43RD SENATE DISTRICT



Dear Friend:

Happy Friday and welcome to the January 15th edition of my Weekly Wrap! We are two weeks into the New Year, and our 2021 Senate Session is well underway.

This week, I recognized all that our heroic, selfless law enforcement officers have done to keep our communities safe and thanked them for protecting and serving New Yorkers. I also received my Senate Committee rankerships (leadership positions on a Senate Committee) and assignments for the new Legislative Session. You can read more about my new Committee leadership roles and assignments in this week's Wrap.

Also this week, my Senate and Assembly Republican colleagues and I pushed for a more effective vaccine distribution plan as the current plan by the Governor and his team is causing confusion and frustration among the people of New York State. I hear, understand, and share your concerns and will continue fighting for a better process and ensuring that the most vulnerable are vaccinated. In this Wrap, I've included information and links regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and County vaccination updates within my 43rd Senate District.

Also posted in this week's Wrap is a letter from my Senate Republican colleagues and I urging the release of Dwyer program funding so this important initiative can continue helping our veterans who have served and sacrificed.

As always, I want to hear from YOU. If you have a comment, question, or concern, please email me at jordan@nysenate.gov or call my office at (518) 371-2751. Thank you for reading and subscribing to my Weekly Wrap. It's an honor and a privilege to serve you!

- Senator Daphne Jordan, 43rd District

Recognizing law enforcement



This past Saturday was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (aka “LEAD”), and with everything that’s happened within the past year, I want to make sure that our great men and women in law enforcement know that they are appreciated for all they do in protecting and serving our communities. If you are a member of law enforcement, or have a loved one serving in law enforcement, thank you!

Standing up for our police

Just days after the observance of National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, my Senate Republican colleagues and I once again stood up for our dedicated police officers in response to a political lawsuit recently filed by the New York State Attorney General against the New York Police Department. I will always proudly, and strongly, stand with the men and women of law enforcement. My Senate Republican colleagues and I oppose this political lawsuit that will make the already incredibly difficult job of our brave NYPD officers even harder. Our press release issued yesterday, Thursday, January 14, is shared below.

NYS SENATE REPUBLICANS BLAST POLITICAL ASSAULT ON NEW YORK’S

FINEST

New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and members of the Senate Republican Conference today expressed their outrage with New York Attorney General Letitia James's announcement of a brazenly political lawsuit against the New York Police Department. Today's announcement comes after last summer's riots, looting, and senseless other destructive acts were estimated to have cost New York City residents and businesses tens of millions of dollars in property and personal damages. Adding a federal monitor will make the NYPD's job even more difficult as they deal with a rising crime rate (shootings up 100% in the city), a once in a lifetime pandemic, and a hostile Democratic Legislature that has made anti-cop legislation a priority.

"In a time when the brave men and women of our law enforcement are under constant barrage, today's announcement by the Attorney General serves as nothing else but a political attack against the NYPD for doing their jobs. Last summer's riots in New York City were not the result of the NYPD. Last year's skyrocketing violent crime rates in New York City were not the result of the NYPD. Outside forces, when combined with awful rhetoric and policy coming out of New York City and State Democrats, made for the environment we see today. This lawsuit will do nothing to protect law-abiding New Yorkers and do everything to further undermine New York's finest. Our conference stands with our NYPD and all local enforcement around the state," said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.

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Frustration and questions amid New York State's COVID-19 vaccination rollout

My office has received numerous inquiries regarding the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine and determining eligibility. To find out if you are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine at this time, you can visit the New York State website [here](#). Unfortunately, the online system is overwhelmed right now. A second option is calling the state hotline to make an appointment for vaccination at **1-833-NYS-4-VAX (1-833-697-4829)**.

I've also heard from many of my constituents who are understandably frustrated and rightfully concerned with New York State's disorganized, chaotic, and confusing rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. I share your concerns and want this broken process fixed ASAP! My message that I recently shared on my Senate Facebook page regarding the need to fix New York's broken COVID-19 rollout program is directly below.

"Constituents have shared that their calls to the state's vaccination hotline (1-833-NYS-4-VAX or 1-833-697-4829) have only caused frustration. Constituents have also shared that when they've called that number – at all hours of the day – they only get an automated message and are disconnected. That needs to stop: the state hotline needs to be staffed with real people who can answer real questions. There are literally thousands of employees all across state government. Just as I advocated in addressing New York's massive unemployment claim backlog in the spring and summer, we need to get people answering the phones who can provide real assistance.

Our counties are 100% ready, willing, and able to carry out emergency plans that they've had for years yet have been given little to no vaccine supply to work with. Some vaccines have even been thrown away due to state protocols of only distributing to the group in Phase 1A, but not having enough people in that category show up, while thousands of other residents remain waiting.

That's unacceptable. The state's approach is overly bureaucratic and isn't working. Local governments – counties like Rensselaer, Saratoga, Columbia, and Washington – have previously performed mass vaccinations, have multiple distribution sites already set up, and can get the job done, safely, effectively, and expeditiously. Albany needs to stop micromanaging this process and start empowering local governments.

The vaccine rollout by the State has been neither thoughtful nor effective. That's why I'll continue fighting for a better process. My Senate Republican colleagues and I will keep pushing the Governor and State Department of Health to fix this broken process and get COVID-19 vaccines out the door to local governments ASAP.”

Links to County COVID-19 vaccination resources

[Saratoga County Vaccine Information](#)

[Saratoga County Facebook Page](#)

[Washington County Vaccine Information](#)

[Washington County Facebook Page](#)

[Rensselaer County Vaccine Information](#)

[Rensselaer County Facebook Page](#)

[Columbia County Vaccine Information](#)

[Columbia County Facebook Page](#)

Additionally, my Republican colleagues in the Senate and Assembly and I are pushing for a thorough and effective vaccine distribution plan. There are so many unanswered questions that we all need to know. Below is a press release advocating for much-needed improvements to the vaccine rollout. We also wrote the Governor outlining our concerns and specific questions. You can read this important letter on my Senate website via the following link: **https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/article/attachment/ortt_barclay_letter.pdf**

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER ORTT, ASSEMBLY REPUBLICAN LEADER BARCLAY PRESS HEALTH COMMISSIONER ON STATE'S SLOW VACCINE ROLLOUT

Republican Leaders in the state Legislature today penned a letter to Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker, former-Secretary to the Governor Larry Schwartz, and Secretary of State Rossana Rosado imploring officials to answer several questions about the state's vaccine rollout and distribution efforts.

Members from the Senate and Assembly Minority Conferences were briefed by Dr. Zucker and Mr. Schwartz on Tuesday, January 5th about the state's vaccine distribution. However, only five legislators were given the opportunity to pose questions pertaining to the state's delayed vaccine rollout.

“While we appreciate the Health Commissioner taking the time to speak to our Conference and field questions from our members, unfortunately, many questions went unanswered and, in some instances, we were given mixed messages and conflicting information. The bottom line is the vaccine rollout throughout the state has been inefficient and ineffective, and I look forward to getting the answers that we, and all New Yorkers, deserve,” said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.

“The early stages of the state's vaccine rollout and distribution plan is already behind, and quite frankly, it's inexcusable. New Yorkers need to be confident in the state's expedient and thorough distribution of the vaccine, and the current plan is not instilling that confidence. Dr. Zucker must address a number of questions – that remain unasked and unanswered – regarding the vaccine's distribution, including why New York State is being outperformed by other states' ability to administer vaccines to their residents,” said Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay.

###

My Senate Committee assignments

Senator Daphne Jordan named Ranking Republican Member on Senate Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee, Senate Libraries Committee, Senate State-Native American Relations Committee, and Senate Women's Issues Committee

Senator Jordan also will serve on the Senate Standing Committees on Agriculture, Procurement and Contracts, and Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, and will continue serving on the Senate Legislative Women's Caucus

Albany, NY – New York State Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C-Halfmoon) today announced her Senate Committee leadership positions and Senate Standing Committee appointments for the 2021 Legislative Session. Senator Jordan was once again named the Ranking Republican Member on the Senate Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee. In addition, Senator Jordan was also named the Ranking Republican Member on the Senate Libraries Committee, the Senate State-Native American Relations Committee, and the Senate Women's Issues Committee, respectively.

Senator Jordan will also continue serving on the Senate Agriculture Committee, the Senate Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee, and begin serving on the Senate Procurements and Contracts Committee. Additionally, Senator Jordan remains a member of the Senate Legislative Women's Caucus.

Senator Jordan's 43rd Senate District, which includes all of Columbia County, and portions of Rensselaer, Washington, and Saratoga Counties, is home to the historic, world-renowned Saratoga Race Course, and Saratoga Casino Hotel.

"Horse racing is vital to our local economy, agricultural sector, and quality of life. I'm thrilled to continue serving as the Ranking Republican Member on the Senate's Racing, Gaming, and Wagering Committee, and will remain a strong, outspoken advocate for horseracing and this vital industry's many stakeholders. New York's equine industry has a \$4.2 billion positive impact on our state's economy, generating 33,000 full-time jobs, with equine commerce resulting in \$187 million in state and local taxes. Additionally, the thousands of horse farms, training centers, and riding stables doing business across the state successfully preserve 1.3 million acres of valuable open space. This is why I'll continue working to support our horse racing industry and strengthen this vital sector. I also will support New York finally adopting mobile sports betting as an important new source of revenue to help address the state's growing budget deficit," Senator Jordan said.

"As a long-time supporter of our excellent public libraries and having led the establishment of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, I'm especially proud to now serve as the Ranking Republican Member on the Senate's Libraries Committee.

I also look forward to my continued leadership role on the Senate State-Native American Relations Committee, and my new leadership role on the Senate Women's Issues Committee, as well as continuing to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee, and the Senate Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee, and begin serving on the Senate Procurements and Contracts Committee and remaining a member of the Senate Legislative Women's Caucus," Senator Jordan stated.

"Between the COVID-19 pandemic, continued economic downturn that's hurt countless small businesses, families, and local communities, and the state's multi-billion-dollar budget shortfall, there's no shortage of challenges facing us. We need to meet and solve these critical challenges on behalf of the hard-working New Yorkers we are honored to serve and represent," Senator Jordan concluded.

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Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin's 2021 State of the County Address

2021 State of the County



*A Virtual Address from Rensselaer County
Executive Steve McLaughlin*

Thursday, January 14 at 9 a.m.

*Hear what's ahead for the Rensselaer County
Business Community in 2021!*

Register for Free!



*Presented in
partnership with:*

**RENSSELAER
COUNTY**

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On Thursday morning, Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin delivered an optimistic, hopeful, and energetic State of the County during a virtual address to the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, saying the County will meet the challenges presented by the pandemic and return to prosperity. County Executive McLaughlin noted the County's history and heritage of innovation, industry, and ingenuity, and said those characteristics will again serve the County well during 2021.

"We have seen major challenges before, and responded with excellence, innovation and ingenuity. That spirit is needed again in Rensselaer County," said Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin.

"Today, I am calling on you, the leaders of our county in business, education, technology, government, and agriculture to use your skills, talents, optimism and energy to restart and revitalize in 2021. Let's return to our winning ways," added Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin.

The County has worked to be well-positioned in the new year. All three of Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin's budgets have included tax decreases and been adopted unanimously. The County successfully paved 50 miles of roads in 2020, a record, with the county paving over 105 miles during McLaughlin's three years as Executive. The County's bond rating has also been upgraded during McLaughlin's service as Rensselaer County Executive.

The County has also seen historic job creation with the Amazon project in Schodack and the ongoing expansion at Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in East Greenbush. Other projects in Troy and surrounding towns have also created new jobs and opportunity. The County has also seen encouraging returns on sales tax numbers in 2020, one year after leading the state in sales tax growth. "Every day presents an opportunity. We believe we have made the best of the opportunities given to us in Rensselaer County, and improved on our foundation for growth, investment, and job creation. As a County, we have also taken hard hits during 2020 but responded with courage, compassion, innovation, and hard work. We can achieve great things and look forward to working with all of you to make 2021 an historic year of comebacks and

new victories,” said Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin.

The County’s response to the pandemic has been inspiring and shows the strength and resiliency of the County, noted Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin. When the County was unable to secure a test site, the county paid to establish an independent COVID-19 testing facility, the only county in the region to make such an investment. The facility has played a role in providing nearly 160,000 tests in the County.

Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin also pointed out the outstanding work of county government during the pandemic by the Health Department, County Aging Department, and other departments. He also noted the important role vaccines will play in restoring the economy.

“The Health Department and Mary Fran deserve special recognition and thanks. They have been on the frontlines battling the outbreak seven days a week since February. They have given so much over these difficult months to keep us safe, while essentially putting their own lives on hold. We owe them great thanks for their service. Their work during these difficult months represents the finest service our county can offer,” said Rensselaer County Executive McLaughlin.

Thank you NYS Troopers



Recently, there have been threats of protests at State Capitols all over the country. We appreciate the New York State Troopers for being here at the Capitol and stopping by the office! Thank you for all that you do to keep us safe.

Advocating for the Dwyer Program to help our veterans



January 14, 2021

Senator John Brooks
Room 806 LOB
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Brooks,

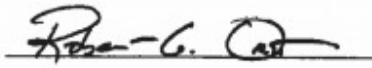
It has come to our attention that neither the Office of Mental Health (OMH) nor the Division of the Budget have been directed by the Senate Majority to release funding allocated in last year's budget for the Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer-to-Peer Support Program. It is discouraging to see this critical funding held up, particularly amidst the current pandemic and the strain it has placed on the mental health of our New Yorkers' -- including our veterans.

The Legislature has consistently worked in a bipartisan fashion to fund the Dwyer program since its inception in 2012, helping veterans in twenty-four counties and New York City. The Senate Minority Conference writes you today to urge the Senate Majority to immediately take the steps necessary to make available the \$4,505,000 allocated in the 2020-2021 State Budget, as well as the remaining allocation for the program from the 2019-2020 State Budget.

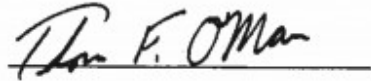
The mission of the Joseph P. Dwyer Program, to connect veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury, has only become more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time when social isolation aggravates mental illness and substance-abuse issues, the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer to Peer Support Program provides an invaluable lifeline for veterans. Additionally, as the economy continues to struggle, the Joseph P. Dwyer Program is an invaluable support for veterans struggling with housing and employment issues.

The Senate Minority Conference fully understands the fiscal limitations posed by the pandemic -- however, the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Support Program is crucial for ensuring the well-being of veterans in New York State.

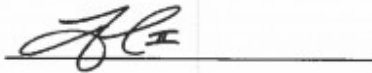
Our veterans continue to sacrifice so much for our state and our country. As policymakers, we often look for opportunities to honor their service. New York State made a commitment to our veterans; it's incumbent upon us to honor that commitment.



Senator Robert G. Ort




Senator Thomas F. O'Mara



Senator Fred Akshar



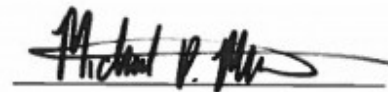
Senator Mario Mattera



Senator James Tedisco



Senator Pamela Helming



Senator Mike Martucci



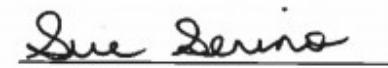
Senator George M. Borello



Senator Daphne Jordan



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan



Senator Sue Serino



Senator Dan Stec



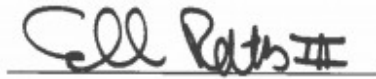
Senator Patty Ritchie



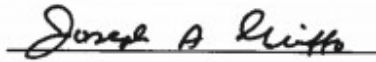
Senator Alexis Weik



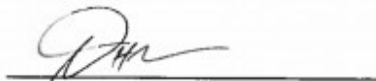
Senator Peter Oberacker



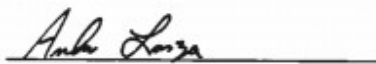
Senator Edward Rath III



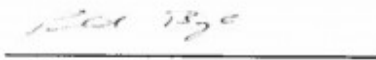
Senator Joseph A. Griffo



Senator Anthony H. Palumbo



Senator Andrew J. Lanza



Senator Phil Boyle

As a long-time advocate for the Joseph P. Dwyer Program, which provides essential mental health support services to our veterans, I proudly stood with my Senate Republican colleagues this week in urging the Senate Majority to release the 2020-21 funds that were specifically set aside for this initiative. A picture of our letter advocating for the release of Dwyer funding is pasted directly above. I've successfully delivered \$860,000 in state funding for the excellent Dwyer programs operating in Saratoga, Rensselaer, and Columbia counties. I know for a fact that the Dwyer program is an important, successful initiative that's saved lives and made a positive difference for countless veterans with PTSD and TBI. Unfortunately, this valuable program is something we have to fight for in the State Budget each year. Helping our veterans

should be a bi-partisan priority and these programs need every penny that they were promised. Our veterans deserve no less!

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THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE