

From: "Senator Daphne Jordan" <jordan@nysenate.gov>

Date: Friday, April 24, 2020 04:07PM

Subject: Weekly Wrap: Successfully advocating small businesses, calling for reform to help unemployed New Yorkers & MORE!



Dear Friend:

Welcome to the latest edition of my Weekly Wrap for the week ending Friday, April 24. It's been a busy week as I've successfully advocated for small businesses in calling for privately-owned golf courses to re-open. I also called for Lebanon Valley Speedway to re-open for tuning and test runs, as well as urging a smart, sensible, regional re-opening plan for New York State to help our struggling small businesses and displaced workers as NYS remains on PAUSE until May 15. In addition, I called for much-needed reform of our state's unemployment system to address the growing backlog of New Yorkers who are still waiting for help. I said this unacceptable delay needed to end and the system needs to be fixed so we can get more assistance to individuals who are hurting from the severe economic downturn caused by COVID-19.

My district office continues working hard to help individuals have their unemployment claims received and responded to promptly by the State Department of Labor, which is struggling to manage the staggering influx of new claims. If we can help you with this, or any other issue about state government, during this difficult and unprecedented time, call me at (518) 371-2751 or email me at jordan@nysenate.gov. Stay healthy and stay safe!

– **Senator Daphne Jordan, 43rd District**

Successfully Advocating for Golf Courses to Re-Open



Last week, after having been contacted by several area golf courses seeking to re-open so golfers could resume playing and get healthy physical activity – and do so in a socially distant and responsible manner – I wrote the Governor asking that Empire State Development allow golf courses to re-open.

My advocacy was successful in our golf courses re-opening and I'm hopeful that this is the beginning of a larger, necessary effort to re-open New York, especially upstate. While we have to remain careful and use common sense to protect ourselves and our fellow New Yorkers from the Coronavirus, small victories such as this bring us another step closer to re-opening our small businesses and communities, getting more workers back on the job, and restoring our economy to help our small businesses and the millions of people who have lost their jobs and are losing hope. We will get through this and it begins by re-opening New York and moving forward, together. My press release containing more details on this issue is below:

For Release: Saturday, April 18, 2020

Senator Daphne Jordan successfully advocates for the re-opening of golf courses

Halfmoon, NY – Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I,Ref-Halfmoon) today announced that she has successfully advocated for the re-opening of golf courses to ensure that New Yorkers have more opportunities for safe, outdoor activity as New York remains on PAUSE. Senator Jordan also received detailed clarification last night from Empire State Development (ESD) regarding its recent issuance of guidance that golf courses could re-open, so long as certain social distancing conditions were met.

In response to requests for assistance from several area golf courses and members of the Capital Region Golf Course Owners Association, on Tuesday,

April 14, Senator Jordan sent correspondence to Governor Cuomo strongly advocating that privately-owned golf courses be allowed to resume operating. Doing so would allow these businesses to maintain some of their operations and provide New Yorkers access to a healthy form of exercise and outdoor activity that is in accordance with federal and state social distancing guidelines of keeping at least six feet of distance between individuals.

In her letter, that was co-signed by Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh and Assemblyman Jake Ashby, Senator Jordan wrote the following:

“Many privately-owned golf courses are seasonal businesses facing a tremendous negative fiscal impact from the Coronavirus public health crisis and have shared their concerns... Prior to the state-mandated shutdown, privately-owned golf courses abided by professional guidance offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the New York State Golf Association (NYSGA). That guidance included the implementation of all CDC and state-mandated guidelines promoting safe, social distancing including no access to pro shops, locker rooms, indoor facilities and restaurants/bars (unless for take-out purposes only), and no transactions of money, credit cards, or other payment for purpose of play, equipment and/or merchandise. In addition, these guidelines featured specific provisions regarding social distancing on the golf course that included staying at least 6 feet away from others, not shaking hands before or after a game, leaving the flagstick in the hole, removing rakes and ball washers from course, not sharing clubs or any other equipment, and limiting golf cart use to one person.”

“During this difficult time, the need for physical exercise and, frankly, a positive diversion provided by a beloved sport such as golf – done in a careful manner with proper social distancing – is important. Our state needs to allow opportunities for individuals to engage in a safe, athletic outlet such as golf for their physical, mental, and emotional health and personal wellbeing. Allowing privately-owned golf courses to remain open will also ensure that staff is available in the event individuals attempt to illicitly use a course without proper supervision. The CDC and NYSGA have established common-sense guidelines for golf courses to remain open that should inform ESD’s decision-making going forward. We respectfully request that you revisit the decision to include privately-owned golf courses as part of the New York on PAUSE directive. Golf courses are businesses that can safely re-open and begin a much-needed start of the necessary effort to get New York’s economy moving forward again.”

On Friday afternoon (April 17), after Senator Jordan had sent her letter earlier in the week, ESD issued updated guidance regarding the operations of privately-owned golf courses (below):

“Golf courses are not essential and cannot have employees working on-premise; notwithstanding this restriction, essential services, such as groundskeeping to avoid hazardous conditions and security, provided by employees, contractors, or vendors are permitted and private operators may permit individuals access to the property so long as there are no gatherings of any kind and appropriate social distancing of six feet between individuals is strictly abided.”

When some area golf courses indicated that they found ESD’s ruling ambiguous, Senator Jordan again corresponded with ESD Friday evening (April 17), asking for further clarity regarding the ruling and its practical impact. ESD responded to Senator Jordan’s request with more information and clarity (below):

“First and as always social distancing protocols and all federal, state and local health and safety guidelines must be adhered to. ... the new guidance doesn’t prohibit private golf course from allowing people on the course. It also doesn’t prohibit the activities the course ownership can allow on their course. This is being widely interpreted to include golfing... If individuals can access and use carts without the need of course employees than that also should be fine. So, with all the proper social distancing, no employees (other than security and limited grounds keeping) on site, recreational uses on private golf courses, including golf would be in compliance.”

Accordingly, as per ESD’s ruling, golfers may once again access golf courses so long as proper social distancing is maintained, a positive outcome that Senator Jordan had advocated for on April 14 in her original correspondence to the Governor.

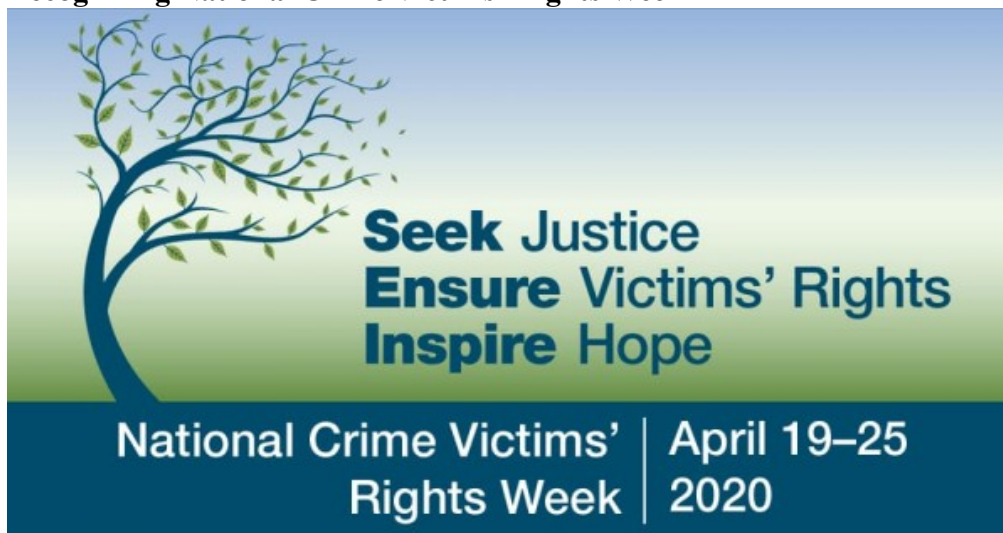
“I’m pleased that the Governor and ESD were so responsive to my advocacy. Now, golfers can once again enjoy a healthy outdoor recreational activity and our golf courses will be able to maintain a semblance of their operations.

I am hopeful that this is the beginning of a larger, necessary effort to re-open New York, especially upstate. While we have to remain careful and use common sense to protect ourselves and our fellow New Yorkers from the Coronavirus, small victories such as this bring us another step closer to re-opening our small businesses and communities, getting more workers back on the job, and restoring our economy to help the millions of people who have lost

their job and are losing hope. We will get through this and it begins by re-opening New York and moving forward, together,” Senator Jordan said.

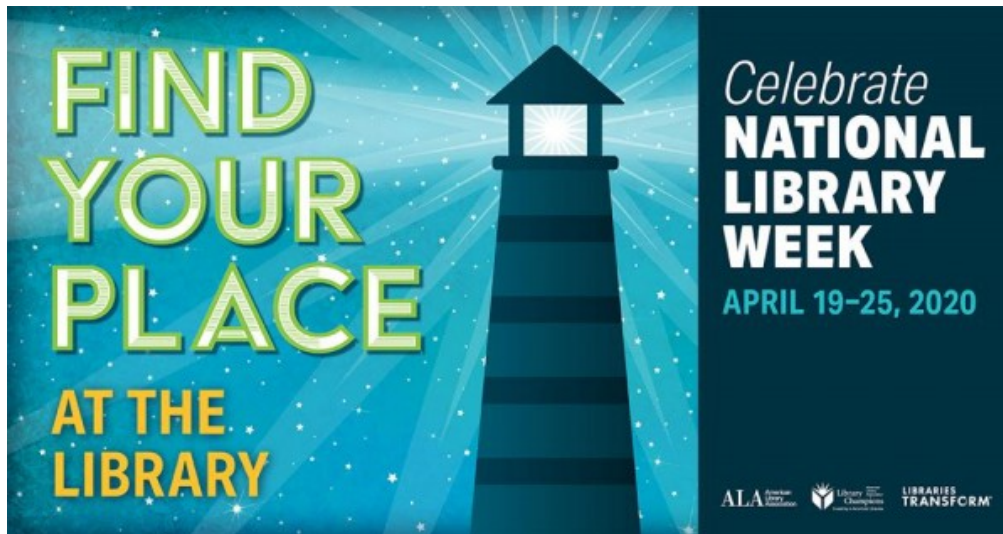
A copy of Senator Jordan’s correspondence to the Governor where she successfully advocated for the re-opening of golf courses can be found [here](#).

Recognizing National Crime Victims’ Rights Week



This week (April 19-25) was recognized as “National Crime Victims’ Rights Week,” an important time to acknowledge and commit ourselves to ensure that victims and their families receive the justice and support they need and fully deserve. I’m proud to sponsor a common sense “Victims’ Rights Agenda” that puts crime victims first. As your Senator, I’ll always fight to protect our citizens and communities from predators and violent criminals!

Celebrating National Libraries Week



This week was also celebrated as National Library Week. Our libraries are vital educational and cultural resources for our communities. While they're closed right now to visitors during the coronavirus, many libraries are still providing valuable services including online story times for children, virtual book talks, eBook and digital film access, and serving as hubs for important information. Our libraries always strive to keep us informed and engaged, even during challenging times. As a long-time advocate for our excellent public libraries, I encourage you to check out your local library's website and see what they're doing during National Library Week this week!

Fighting to Re-open Lebanon Valley Speedway



On Tuesday, I partnered with my good friend Assemblyman Jake Ashby in writing the Governor regarding the re-opening of Lebanon Valley Speedway so local racers could test and tune their vehicles. Our letter and press release with more details are included with this post. This is part of the ongoing, necessary effort to re-open NY, and do so in a safe, sensible, and regional manner. My press release with more details is below:

For Release: Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Senator Daphne Jordan and Assemblyman Jake Ashby write Governor Cuomo seeking a waiver for Lebanon Valley Speedway to re-open for local racers to test and tune their vehicles

Senator Jordan says “It’s time for New York State to restart its economic engines”

Columbia County, NY – Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I,Ref-Halfmoon) and Assemblyman Jake Ashby (R,C,I,Ref-Castleton) today announced that they have written Governor Cuomo seeking a waiver from state government from

the NY on PAUSE directive so that Lebanon Valley Speedway may re-open for local racers to test and tune their vehicles.

The letter (attached) is the latest step in Senator Jordan and Assemblyman Ashby's continued call for a careful, coordinated, regional re-opening of New York State's economy to help thousands of struggling small businesses, 1.2 million – and growing – New Yorkers filing for unemployment, and countless communities impacted by the Coronavirus outbreak's economic fallout.

“Lebanon Valley Speedway is one of America's premier racetracks. This outdoor venue is large enough to easily and safely accommodate local racers to come test and tune their vehicles for the day – hopefully coming soon – when the speedway can resume races. This is another necessary step that can, and should, be carefully taken to re-open New York and get our economic engines running again. With careful consideration, common sense, and practical guidance from businesses and health officials, I have no doubt that New York's economy will be revving up soon,” Senator Jordan said.

While the venue would be open, there would be no spectators allowed for any test runs. In their letter sent to the Governor earlier today, Senator Jordan and Assemblyman Ashby wrote the following:

“Our districts are the proud home to Lebanon Valley Speedway, a half-mile high-banked clay oval located halfway between Albany and Pittsfield, Massachusetts. As you may be aware, Lebanon Valley Speedway is one of the premier racetracks in the United States drawing tens of thousands of racing enthusiasts annually, showcasing some of the very best in auto racing excitement to a passionate fan base.

We write to share a recent request from Howard Commander, owner, and promoter of Lebanon Valley Speedway, asking for consideration from New York State for his business to help meet the evolving needs of racers. Specifically, Mr. Commander asked for our assistance in securing a waiver for Lebanon Valley Speedway so local racers may test and tune their cars at the raceway while your New York on PAUSE Executive Order remains in effect until May 15.

It's important to note that Lebanon Valley Speedway has taken every practical precaution necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic, following all state

guidelines and regulations. In fact, Mr. Commander has already canceled events, and seen events canceled, due to Coronavirus pandemic. These cancelations have already imposed serious and significant financial burdens on the raceway, which operates on a seasonal basis. Mr. Commander genuinely wants to help the car enthusiasts that work on the cars all winter be able to tune their vehicles at the track and keep interest among the fan base. As you may be aware, Lebanon Valley Speedway is a large, outdoor venue that could easily, and safely, accommodate car enthusiasts working on their cars in a manner that's fully in keeping with necessary social distancing protocols so important during this difficult time.

As we begin to enter the next and necessary structured phases of re-opening New York, as we have called for this past weekend, we ask that Empire State Development agrees to Lebanon Valley Speedway's request that racers be able to test and tune their cars at this beloved outdoor raceway."

A copy of my correspondence to Governor Cuomo can be found [here](#).

Special Message for Small Business Owners and Farmers



**COVID-19
SMALL BUSINESS
RESOURCES**

his week, Congress passed a \$480 billion relief package that will provide funding for small businesses and farms hurt by COVID-19. There are two main

federal programs PPP and EIDL. Businesses can apply for BOTH. These programs started up several weeks ago but ran out of money. The new federal funds will allow these programs to reopen. That said, they will likely only be open for a couple of days before this funding is exhausted. If you want to apply, you must be prepared to act quickly. In general (not every circumstance), farms are eligible now for both programs. Farm Credit East can be reached at 518-692-0269.

PPP Funding: What is it?

The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.

Where to apply?

Those interested should immediately contact the bank/credit union they do business with. If the program has yet to re-open, they should still contact their bank/credit union and let them know they are interested and see what documents they need to gather so they can apply immediately when it opens back up.

EIDL Funding: What is it?

EIDL are working capital loans that may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills and operating expenses that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred – they are designed to help entities stay afloat during the declared disaster and are not meant for business expansion.

The legislative text of the CARES Act specifies that the advance payment may be used for providing paid sick leave to employees, maintaining payroll, meeting increased costs to obtain materials, making rent or mortgage payments, and repaying obligations that cannot be met due to revenue losses. In general the loan can be used for day-to-day operating expenses.

Where to apply?

This must be done by the business — In most cases it does not go through your bank (this application will remain closed until the President signs it into law, prospective applicants should bookmark page and check frequently):

<https://www.sba.gov/page/disaster-loan-applications>.

Fixing New York State's Broken Unemployment System



On Wednesday, I issued a press release with my Senate GOP colleagues Senator Rob Ortt, Senator Pam Helming, and Senator George Borrello regarding the continued problems and backlogs folks are facing in trying to file unemployment claims. Millions of New Yorkers are hurting and need help. This ongoing problem at the State Department of Labor needs to get fixed – fast! My press release with more details is below:

For Release: Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Senator Daphne Jordan and Senate Republican colleagues call for State Department of Labor failures to be addressed

Albany, NY – In light of mounting disappointment, despair, frustration, and anger over the continued inability of the New York State Department of Labor to address the growing backlog of New Yorkers attempting to file unemployment claims, Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I,Ref-Halfmoon) and her Senate Republican colleagues called for the Department's chronic failures to be addressed.

During the Coronavirus crisis, Senator Jordan's office has received several hundred phone calls and emails from constituents in the 43rd Senate District who have lost their jobs and need immediate assistance from the state in the form of unemployment insurance. Just today, Senator Jordan's office was informed by the State Department of Labor that individuals seeking to file for unemployment should be prepared to wait 10-14 days to even receive a call back from the Department. This unacceptable two-week delay comes after the Department of Labor's much-publicized reboot of its unemployment system and pledges to fix the broken system.

"The Coronavirus health crisis has caused an economic crisis with approximately 1.2 million New Yorkers applying for unemployment and 22 million Americans out of work. These are real people, not statistics; they are hurting and need immediate assistance. While the State Department of Labor has undertaken much-needed efforts to fix its broken system, the fact of the matter is that thousands – possibly tens of thousands – of unemployed New Yorkers still can't get through and have gone weeks without money. The system still isn't working, people are frustrated, angry, and want to know why state government wasn't better prepared for the influx of new claims. My office has received several hundred phone calls and emails from constituents desperately seeking help in trying to get through and file their unemployment claims. This ongoing problem needs to get fixed, fast. Whether it's through surging more state employees to help with the unanswered claims, or continuing to improve the website, the Department of Labor needs to step up and get folks the help they need," Senator Jordan said.

Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,IP,Ref-North Tonawanda) said, "The only ones not shocked by the Department of Labor's botched unemployment system are the elected officials, small businesses, and constituents who have had the misfortune of dealing with the DOL in the past. Unfortunately, the current pandemic and shutdown of our state have introduced hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers to the same misfortune. As a State Senator, I have gone months where I was unable to get a simple returned phone call from the department's commissioner. While I am saddened, I am certainly not shocked by the latest iteration of the DOL's systemic failure. When taxpayers spend hundreds of millions a year on a government entity, they deserve better than an antiquated operating system and obstinate bureaucracy. Gov. Cuomo must step in and address the mess that is his Department of Labor. Make no mistake about it: COVID-19 didn't cause the DOL's failure, it only exposed it."

Senator Pam Helming (R,C,I-Geneva) said, "Across New York State, families

are struggling to put food on the table and pay their bills because of continued delays with unemployment. The Governor today described these delays as an “annoyance.” To many, these delays are the difference between being able to keep their lights on and rent/mortgage paid. New York has one of the largest, most expensive state governments in the nation and should be able to figure out how to process these applications in a timely way. That is not too much to ask when you consider how much we pay in taxes!”

Senator George Borrello (R,C,I,LIBT-Sunset Bay) said, “Desperate and frustrated constituents have been calling my district offices seven days a week to plead for help in the face of repeated, failed attempts to file their unemployment claims through a system unable to handle the demand. It is clear that the Department of Labor’s focus in recent years has been enacting ever-more onerous rules and regulations on employers, while neglecting badly needed technology and efficiency upgrades to its online and phone claims systems. Unemployed New Yorkers just looking to put food on the table deserve better.”

Recognizing Our Hometown Heroes Serving in the Fight Against COVID-19



JULIE SQUADRITO
Duncan's Dairy Bar and Cakes by Duncan

TOM KOVAL
Halfmoon

KYLE BELOKOPITSKY

Twin Town Little League

PATRICIA KLIMKEWICZ

HVCC Health Sciences Dean & U.S. Navy Nurse

DENISE AYOTTE
Halfmoon



Last week my “Hometown Heroes” recognized local businesses in 43rd Senate District – Regeneron, Ames Goldsmith Corp, and Fred's Tents and Canopies Inc. – for their important work in the fight against COVID-19.

Today, I want to recognize more Hometown Heroes from across my 43rd Senate District, individuals, and businesses whose selfless service, volunteerism, and generosity are helping our communities. My thanks to all our Hometown Heroes!

Julie Squadrito, Duncan's Dairy Bar and Cakes By Duncan's

Julie Squadrito, of Duncan’s Dairy Bar and Cakes by Duncan, own a laser cutter that makes custom acrylic and wood cake toppers for customers. Julie also belongs to a Facebook group for users of this laser where people share ideas for special projects. Several of the members of the group were talking about hooks and how they were donating them to local medical professionals during the COVID-19 outbreak. The hooks are important because instead of connecting the mask behind an individual’s ears, which eventually get sore, an individual can instead use the new acrylic hook to connect both sides of their face mask. Julie had some extra acrylic and decided to make a few of these hooks for facemasks to see if there was a demand. Julie has since given out close to about 2,000 of these special hooks with more requests coming in. The hooks have been provided to local hospitals, nursing homes, medical transports, medical offices, and even grocery clerks. Julie has shipped these hooks to as far away as North Carolina’s University Health Care in Chapel Hill. Julie informed me that several people have come forward and provided donations toward the cost of materials and that she’ll continue providing the hooks for as long as needed.

Tom Koval, Halfmoon

The Town of Halfmoon has a large population of senior citizens and Tom Koval has been busy collecting non-perishable foods to get to Town officials for assistance in keeping our seniors fed and out of harm’s way at the stores. The collection point is his office located at 110 Button Road in the Town of Halfmoon. Tom said that individuals wishing to support this cause should stop anytime day or night with donations. There is a large brown metal box in front for donations covered by camera surveillance so anything dropped off will be safe. Donors don’t need to encounter anyone unless they wish too. Tom also encourages everyone to help donate blood as there is a life-threatening shortage.

Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky, Twin Town Little League

Kyle Belokopitsky of Wynantskill is the Executive Director at NYS PTA. She's also the driving force behind a special food donation drive at Twin Town Little League. The food drive helps ensure that local families with children have enough food during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local families in need are invited to help themselves, reflecting a strong community spirit. Kyle was quoted in a Channel 13 story about the food drive saying "We talk about community baseball, and we're raising children to be good community citizens. It's not just about running the bases. It's a really great way to remind all of our players who can't be out here playing that they — especially Twin Town and all the little leagues and all families — really have to find ways to give back."

Patricia Klimkewicz, HVCC Health Sciences Dean, U.S. Navy Nurse

Patricia Klimkewicz is a Halfmoon resident, Hudson Valley Community College's (HVCC) Dean of Health Sciences and has been deployed as a Navy Nurse as part of the COVID-19 response in New York City. A registered nurse and a commander in the United States Navy Nurse Corps, Patricia is serving at the Javits Convention Center, which was temporarily set up to treat COVID-19 patients in New York City. On April 19, she was promoted to Captain in Times Square. Prior to becoming Dean, she was a professor in the Nursing department for 19 years. She has previously been deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and Landstuhl, Germany.

Denise Ayotte, Halfmoon

In response to the Coronavirus and the urgent need for facemasks, Denise Ayotte decided to start making these in-demand items to help people stay healthy. Denise believes, in her words, that there is a need to "help each other and do for each other." Denise made the masks for West Crescent Fire House because they are like family to her. She is presently waiting on elastic to make more and is having a hard time finding the necessary elastic. Denise will continue making facemasks to help individuals and first responders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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