

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

Date: Thursday, June 18, 2020 06:01PM

Subject: Weekly Wrap: DMV reopening's, Capital Region moves to Phase 3, calling for accountability and MORE!

For Follow up: 🟢 Normal Priority.



Dear Friend:

The month of June is in full swing – and so is this latest edition of my Weekly Wrap! There's so much news to share that my Weekly Wrap is arriving a day early and is full of new and noteworthy developments including:

- **Reopening of County DMVs;**
- **Capital Region moving to Phase 3 of reopening;**
- **My continued efforts to ensure accountability over COVID-19 claiming the lives of 6,000 NY senior citizens in nursing homes;**
- **Advocating for veteran's services;**
- **Delivering NYS Hand Sanitizer to Chrome Food & Spirits in Waterford;**
and
- **Taking part in the Halfmoon Farmer's Market ribbon cutting.**

I hope you enjoy these weekly informational email updates sharing news you can use about our state government and local communities. Have a terrific weekend and enjoy the sunshine!

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

Unemployment claims update

Following up on last week's update regarding my office's ongoing efforts to help constituents with unresolved state unemployment claims, the following are the latest numbers as of today, Thursday, June 18, 2020, in terms of unemployment claims and my office's advocacy on behalf of individuals seeking assistance:

- **11 new unemployment cases this week thus far;**
- **477 constituents across the 43rd Senate District have reached out for help; and**
- **1,556 exchanged emails between the State Department of Labor and Dan Casale, my Director of Constituent Services, who's been working non-stop on helping individuals with their unemployment claims.**

While we're seeing some progress, there are still many – far too many – of our fellow New Yorkers still waiting for their benefits or for their claim to be processed by the State Department of Labor. If my office can be of assistance with an unemployment issue, please call (518) 371-2751 and ask for Dan Casale who will do everything possible to help you!

County Departments of Motor Vehicles reopening



Good news: the Saratoga and Columbia County DMVs reopened locations on Monday, June 15 and the Rensselaer County DMV re-opened on Wednesday, June 17. Thank you, Saratoga County Clerk Craig Hayner, Columbia County Clerk Holly Tanner, and Rensselaer County Clerk Frank Merola, for your continued commitment to serving taxpayers!

You can visit the respective County Clerk webpages for more DMV news, updates, hours of operation, locations, and learn more about scheduling an appointment. The website links are below:

Columbia County: <https://sites.google.com/a/columbiacountyny.com/columbia-county-clerk/>

Rensselaer County: <https://www.rensco.com/departments/county-clerk/>

Saratoga County: <https://www.saratogacountyny.gov/saratoga-county-clerk/>

Capital Region moving to Phase 3 of reopening



This past Wednesday, the Capital Region reopened under Phase 3. A safe, sensible reopening needs to continue moving forward so more small businesses can reopen successfully, more folks can get back to work, and we can get our economy moving again as I've continually been calling for these past months. More information about Phase 3 can be found here: <https://dailygazette.com/.../capital-region-can-go-to-phase-3...>

Celebrating Flag Day



Sunday, June 14, was Flag Day, a special day and perfect opportunity to honor the creation and storied history of our nation's flag and celebrate the timeless values of freedom, equality, and opportunity for all that it symbolizes. You can learn more about Flag Day and our American Flag here: <https://www.military.com/flag-day>. Stars and Stripes forever!

Continuing to push for checks and balances in state government



Governor Cuomo has once again overreached in terms of the emergency powers given to him that were intended to deal solely with the COVID crisis. The Governor's recent Executive Order 203 has nothing to do with the COVID outbreak. The order mandates local governments to review local policing policies with a threat of potentially defunding local police departments. Unilateral decisions like this which extend well beyond emergency powers, in a government with three co-equal branches of government, should not be the sole decision of the Governor.

Time and again the Governor has exceeded his powers during the COVID outbreak and made unilateral decisions impacting our economy, small businesses, and communities. We need to restore true checks and balances in state government and ensure that this or any future Governor cannot exceed their authority!

Shedding light on Governor Cuomo's failed nursing home policies



A new article – “Fire Through Dry Grass: Andrew Cuomo Saw COVID-19's Threat to Nursing Homes. Then He Risked Adding to It” – from ProPublica, an independent, nonprofit newsroom focused on investigative journalism is a must-read. The article is a devastating, fact-based indictment of Governor Cuomo's

direct role in the avoidable tragedies that claimed the lives of over 6,000 senior citizen nursing home residents – with some speculating that the actual number may be closer to 10,000 to 11,000. The true number of lives lost may not be known for months.

The article discusses Diamond Hill Nursing Home in Troy that was mandated by Governor Cuomo and State Health Commissioner Zucker to admit a COVID-19 positive patient which ultimately led to the devastating loss of 18 residents, as well as infecting 58 residents and sickening 50 of the facility's staff. The state did not follow through with proper oversight of Diamond Hill Nursing Home.

This article also cites the responsible, principled, forward-thinking leadership of Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin who thankfully defied the Governor's foolish mandate and prevented COVID-19 positive patients from being placed by the state into the County's nursing home. Not one COVID-19 death occurred in the County's nursing home. County Executive McLaughlin's leadership saved countless lives and prevented untold suffering. This thorough, well-researched article is a must-read for anyone wanting an independent, objective, non-partisan review of the facts. It also reinforces the need for an independent state and federal investigation into the Governor's irresponsible mandate, as I and many other state legislators of both parties, Congressional Members, and New York City Council Members are publicly calling for.

Besides shining a light on this preventable, horrific tragedy, and continually calling for an independent state-federal investigation of the Governor's reckless mandate, back on May 20, I proposed several real solutions to help protect our nursing home residents and the people who care for them. My goal is to ensure this avoidable tragedy never happens again. My real solutions include the following:

- Provide all necessary test kits directly to the facilities who have been scrambling to access them;
- Utilize the National Guard to assist in administering tests and cleansing facilities to provide critical relief;
- Use short swab or saliva tests;
- Provide PPE to nursing homes, long term care and adult day care facilities;
- Create a long-term care specific staffing pool; and

- Establish regional facilities for COVID positive nursing home patients.

Moving forward, our focus should be getting answers, demanding accountability, and ensuring such a preventable tragedy never recurs. I'm hopeful that we'll realize these important goals.

To read the full article, click [here](#).

Advocating for veteran's services

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June 17, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write respectfully requesting that the provision of veteran's services be deemed essential, and offices reopened to veterans with safety guidelines, so our excellent local Veteran's Service Agencies may begin resuming these critical policies and programs for the courageous men and women who have fought for and defended our freedom.

Many veteran's advocates, and veterans themselves, have shared their genuine concerns over the unfortunate stigmatization of veteran's services as somehow being "non-essential." Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Veteran's services make a tremendous difference for millions of veterans and proven, bipartisan initiatives like the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Peer to Peer Counseling Program have saved lives.

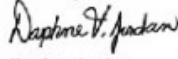
Besides the serious issue of stigmatization, Veteran's Service Providers have raised several excellent points relating to these essential services being unable to be provided during this time of the COVID-19 outbreak.

First, under the current circumstances, there is a notable lack of much-needed personal interaction when assisting a veteran, widow, or family when everything must be done over the phone, or by email, fax, etc. Second, the increased time of having to send documents for signature in the mail (and wait for them to return) is cause for concern as every added day in the process of a claim results in benefits and money being lost. Third, Veteran's Service Providers are unable to afford a veteran with military honors during this time as families have been told by funeral directors that your administration will not let the National Guard Honor Guard travel to perform military funeral honors. Fifth and finally, staying in regular communication with veterans and families to ensure their safety and wellbeing is of critical importance and made much more difficult during this time as the files of veterans are restricted and cannot be taken home by service providers to work on.

It is for all these reasons that we respectfully request your consideration in deeming veteran's services as essential and offices reopened to veterans with safety guidelines.

Doing so would ensure that our dedicated, professional Veteran's Service Providers may resume the provision of these necessary and potentially life-saving services. Thank you for your consideration of our mutual request.

Sincerely,



Daphne Jordan
State Senator, 43rd District

Gary Flaherty
Director, Columbia County Veterans Service Agency

Frank McClement
Director, Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency

Peter Goebel
Director, Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency

The Veterans Service Directors for Columbia, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties (Gary Flaherty, Peter Goebel, and Frank McClement, respectively) all signed onto my letter which is pictured above. These services are ESSENTIAL and need to be provided for the men and women who served, sacrificed, and defended our freedom. I'm proud to advocate for the immediate resumption of these services and will continue being an outspoken voice for our veterans.

Delivering NYS Hand Sanitizer to Chrome Food & Spirits in Waterford



Wednesday was a beautiful summer day and presented the perfect opportunity for me to make another special delivery of New York State Hand Sanitizer to a business in my 43rd Senate District! I delivered hand sanitizer to Darla and Dave Cherry of Chrome Food & Spirits in Waterford which is very busy preparing to reopen.

Taking Part in Halfmoon Farmer's Market Ribbon Cutting





Also on Wednesday, I took part in the Halfmoon Farmer's Market Ribbon Cutting, where I'm pictured above. The Halfmoon Farmer's Market is open Wednesdays, from 3-7, and features crafts, fresh produce, vendors, baked goods, Rolling Smoke BBQ, and so much more. I'm happy to support the over 400 farmers markets in New York State, especially those in the 43rd Senate District!

Hailing Hometown Heroes for the 43rd Senate District

Thank you! *Hometown* **HEROES** 43RD NYS SENATE DISTRICT

Proud to again recognize some terrific *#HometownHeroes* from my 43rd Senate District for all they're doing to help the community.



It's always wonderful recognizing the 43rd Senate District's Hometown Heroes who continue helping, serving, and making a positive difference! These heroes make it a priority to assist the community and serve others and I'm proud to present this latest edition of my Hometown Heroes for the 43rd Senate District. The Hometown Heroes recognized here are: Great Lengths Hair Salon, Kinderhook, Hoosick Falls Police Officer Cory Wagner, and First Light. You are true heroes and we celebrate your contributions to the community!

Great Lengths Hair Salon, Kinderhook

Great Lengths Salon owner Melissa Stickles' customers have been chomping at the bit to get back in her chair and Melissa has no immediate plans to raise prices to manage customer demand. "At Great Lengths, we charge an honest price for the privilege of making people feel better about themselves." Reopening has really stressed many salon owners, especially Melissa: How to deal with the scheduling and rescheduling of months of work? It's that first week back that is going to be the worst. How can you pick favorites? You can't, and you don't? Melissa came up with a solution: The Battle for the Chair Fundraiser. During the first week back, customers with appointments will be asked to donate on top of the cost of their service. Those proceeds will be distributed to the Kinderhook Elks Club. The Kinderhook Elks Club is a not-for-profit that supports local charities and events including the Local Food Banks, The Fireman's Home, The Marion Stegman Fund, Local Eagle Scouts, D.A.R.E., and The Backpack Program. Great Lengths

Hair Salon worked 45 hours in 5 days and raised over \$550.00 from their opening day June 3 to June 7.

Hoosick Falls Police Officer Cory Wagner

Hoosick Falls Police Officer Cory Wagner recently worked with a Village official to save a man's life. Officer Wagner was in his patrol car when he saw a man collapse to the ground. Thinking quickly, Officer Wagner began CPR receiving the help of Town Supervisor Mark Surdam as medical experts took over and were able to get the man to a hospital and save his life. "I've been on the job for seven years," Officer Wagner said. "All my training and skills came into play and immediately took action." Officer Wagner says that he performed CPR for just over three minutes, and he says he'll be meeting the man he saved sometime this week after he's released from the hospital.

First Light

Sara Najafipour, salesperson for First Light, recently dropped off 500 face masks to the Shenendehowa Transportation Department as a donation from her company. First Light is the maker of the brightly lit school bus signs. The masks will be added to the department's emergency supply to prepare for the upcoming school reopening. Thank you to Sara and First Light President Kevin Smith for their generous donation and support of school transportation safety.

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THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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