



Dear Friend:

Happy Friday, and welcome to the December 11 edition of my Weekly Wrap! With Hanukkah beginning yesterday, and Christmas now only 14 days away, the holiday season's in full swing!

This week's Wrap begins with the Town of Halfmoon's Annual Tree Lighting ceremony, a special, beloved local event that I was happy to attend last Sunday. It was wonderful seeing all the trees that were donated and decorated in honor of loved ones that are no longer with us.

On Monday, I honored the courageous Americans whose lives were taken in the attack on Pearl Harbor, a day that will live in infamy. As we remember their lives and mourn their loss, we also remember their families and those that served in WWII. We are forever grateful for their service.

Rensselaer County is busy spreading kindness and holiday cheer through the County's annual toy drive. A big thank you to Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin and everyone who participated, as there were stacks upon stacks of toys for children!

A local business in Saratoga Springs is also spreading kindness through a Holiday Giving Tree Raffle. A beautifully decorated tree is on display in the Piper Boutique and will be taken home by the raffle winner. All proceeds will be donated to benefit kids battling cancer. The winner is also highly encouraged to donate the tree to the hospital for all the kids to see. More details on this are here in my Wrap.

On Wednesday, I partnered with Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and my Senate Republican colleagues in calling to preserve jobs by pausing a minimum wage increase. We wrote Governor Cuomo asking him to halt the scheduled hikes, which would lead to additional layoffs and business closures.

Later on Wednesday, I joined an important informational presentation by Hecate Energy, a company in the process of developing a 60-megawatt photovoltaic solar facility located in Columbia County.

On Thursday, many celebrated the first day of Hanukkah! May all those celebrating have a happy and joyful holiday.

Earlier this morning, Senator Jim Tedisco and I sent a letter to Governor Cuomo and State Health Commissioner Zucker to make certain that our first responders are part of Phase 1a for New York's forthcoming COVID vaccine distribution. You'll read more details on this important effort here in my Weekly Wrap.

Also today, Friday, December 11, I had the privilege of taking part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new Stewart's Shops opening in the Town of Moreau. Congratulations to everyone at Stewart's Shops!

At the beginning of next month, we'll be entering a new legislative session and I want to hear from YOU. If you have a comment, question, concern, or a good idea for new legislation, email me at jordan@nysenate.gov or call my district 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**

Attending The Town of Halfmoon's Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony



Halfmoon's Annual Tree Lighting ceremony is among my favorites! This year, 43 memorial trees were donated and decorated by the families of loved ones no longer with us. It was an honor to read the names of the Ceremony Honorees with Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh. Special thank you to Halfmoon Supervisor Kevin Tollisen, Halfmoon Celebrations Events volunteers, and the Halfmoon Parks Department for making this important event so successful every year!

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day



“December 7, 1941 – a date which will live in infamy.” – President Franklin D. Roosevelt

On December 7 and every day, we remember the lives of over 2,400 Americans that were taken in the attack on Pearl Harbor. God bless our veterans, their families, and all who served in WWII.

Rensselaer County Toy Drive



Everyone loves good news, and that's exactly what Rensselaer County delivered to brighten the week! Rensselaer County shared that residents are generous and giving during the holidays, particularly this year. Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin visited the Youth Department's Debbie Essenter Fleming to check out the toys already collected during the County's annual toy drive. Thanks to all those who have supported Rensselaer County's

efforts to brighten the lives of children this year.

Local business tree raffle to benefit kids battling cancer



Piper Boutique is hosting a Holiday Giving Tree Raffle and donating the proceeds to the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. The winner is encouraged to donate this extraordinary tree to the hospital so that children battling cancer will have the holidays brought to them. The raffle is open until December 18. Let's help this business reach its fundraising goal! You can donate here:

https://secure2.convio.net/mskcc/site/TR?team_id=73891&fr_id=3453&pg=team

Advocating for small businesses

ALBANY OFFICES
ROOM 909 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
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December 9, 2020

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Pursuant to subdivision six of §652 of the Labor Law, the Commissioner of Labor based upon a report and recommendation from the Director of the Budget, can temporarily suspend any scheduled increases to the minimum wage.

The minimum wage is scheduled to increase on December 31, 2020 from the current hourly rate of \$13 per hour to the statutorily scheduled rate of \$14 per hour on Long Island and Westchester County. It is also scheduled to increase from \$11.80 to \$12.50 per hour in the rest of the state outside of New York City, which currently has a minimum wage \$15 per hour.

The Senate Republican Conference has always stood by businesses, particularly small and mid-sized businesses that are the backbone of the State's economy.

We believe that any increase to the minimum wage would have great and far-reaching consequences for businesses that are only barely staying afloat in the current state of this pandemic. According to the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB), 90 percent of small businesses that received Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans have entirely spent down those funds and are ready to initiate the process for loan forgiveness. PPP is a federal program designed to provide an incentive to small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. Even with PPP and other programs, according to NFIB, approximately 20 percent of small business owners predict that they will go out of business in the next six months and another 19 percent anticipate that they will be out of business within a year. **Any increases to the minimum wage are certain to exacerbate this problem.**

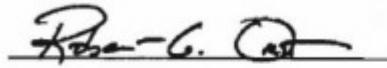
We understand that countless individuals have struggled during this pandemic and continue to struggle. However, based upon the above and the best information available to us, we believe that increasing the minimum wage in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic would do more harm than good to those we represent. The state must avoid inflicting additional economic hardship on

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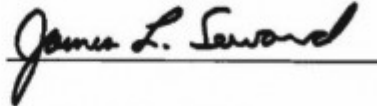
businesses and causing many small and medium size businesses, especially family-owned restaurants, to go out of business entirely - hurting businesses and workers alike.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you use your statutory authority to delay all increases in the minimum wage until the Covid-19 pandemic ends.

Sincerely,



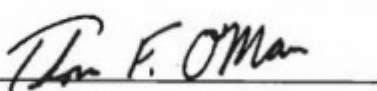
Senator Robert G. Ort



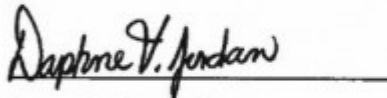
Senator James L. Seward



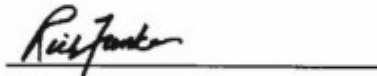
Senator Fred Akshar



Senator Thomas F. O'Mara



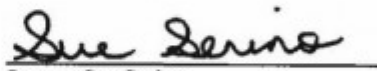
Senator Daphne Jordan



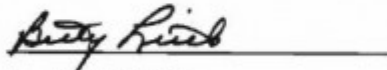
Senator Rich Funke



Senator George M. Borello



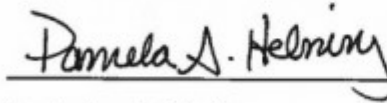
Senator Sue Serino



Senator Betty Little



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan



Senator Pamela Helming



Senator Patty Ritchie

Our state must step up and help the countless small businesses that are struggling during the ongoing COVID pandemic. A temporary pause in minimum wage increases would help our small businesses that are desperately trying to keep their doors open and avoid laying off workers. This was the important message of the letter (pictured above) issued by my Senate Republican colleagues and me to Governor Cuomo this week calling for the temporary pause to help our job creators. This and other common-sense steps should be taken to help our job creators and their employees who are hurting and facing incredible financial hardship.

Shepherd's Run Solar virtual Informational open house

WELCOME TO THE SHEPHERD'S RUN SOLAR FARM

**WELCOME TO THE SHEPHERD'S RUN SOLAR
VIRTUAL INFORMATIONAL OPEN HOUSE**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will provide renewable energy to Columbia County while protecting and improving our clean air, water quality, and soil resources.

Project Details

- 60 MW photovoltaic (PV) solar facility.
- The facility will be built on several parcels east of Taconic Hills School District and north of Copake Lake. It will occupy approximately 360 acres where the panels will cover 280 acres.
- Ground-mounted solar farm with PV panels on galvanized steel tracker racking structures.
- Low-profile, approximately 10 feet high above grade at the tallest point (about the height of field corn stalks).
- Crystalline type panel commonly used for residential rooftop systems.

On Wednesday, I joined the Shepherd's Run Solar Farm in Copake for an online informational session that afforded members of the community an opportunity to listen, learn, and ask questions. The Town of Copake is opposed to the scope and size of this project in their pristine beautiful countryside and has shared those specific concerns with me and others. I will continue to closely and carefully monitor this issue and be responsive to community concerns.

Chag Chanukah Sameach, or Happy Hanukkah!



Yesterday, Thursday, December 10, was the beginning of the eight-day Jewish celebration of Hannukah, also known as “Chanukah,” and I wish all those celebrating a blessed and joyful holiday!

Standing up for our brave first responders



December 10, 2020

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

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing to you on behalf of those men and women who serve on the frontline of our fight against the Coronavirus pandemic. We strongly urge that, before any plan for vaccination is implemented by New York State, that you ensure that **our firefighters and all of our frontline emergency first responders are among the first to have access to the Coronavirus vaccine.**

Many local volunteer firefighter and ambulance departments are struggling with bare-bones budgets and inadequate staffing levels **in addition to** the requirement that they continue operating at full capacity, **ESPECIALLY** during this time of crisis. This obviously puts them at extreme risk and danger, regardless of the uncertainty of the crisis, and when experts were uncertain of any effects of the Coronavirus, these individuals bravely placed their hands on patients to comfort and care for our friends and family who became compromised. If one first responder in a department comes down with the virus, they could force an entire agency to temporarily shut down endangering whole communities.

Governor, our dedicated and courageous emergency first responders put their lives on the line every time they respond to a 911 call to enter a burning building or hop in an ambulance and go to an emergency, and this pandemic has made their jobs even more stressful and dangerous to them and their colleagues and families. We need to ensure that the people we hope and expect will be there as the front-line of care for those who may have COVID-19 are among the top tier of essential personnel who can receive the vaccine. By protecting our firefighters and emergency first responders from the Coronavirus, we will better protect all citizens.

Sincerely,

Senator James N. Tedisco
49th Senate District

Senator Daphne Jordan
43rd Senate District

CC: NYS Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker

Earlier today, Senator Jim Tedisco and I wrote to Governor Cuomo and State Health Commissioner Howard Zucker urging them to protect our firefighters and all frontline emergency first responders from the coronavirus by ensuring that these essential workers are among the first to have access to the COVID-19 vaccine (our letter is pictured above).

Under the Governor's current COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan, firefighters, and some emergency first responders who are often the first on the scene of an emergency to treat sick and injured citizens and those who may be infected with the coronavirus in confined spaces such as the back of an ambulance, may not be able to get vaccinated until Phase 2. The Governor's current vaccine distribution plan is particularly concerning to volunteer firefighter and ambulance departments that have a small staff. If one first responder in a

department comes down with COVID-19 they could force the entire agency to temporarily shut down and endanger communities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization and Prevention is recommending that EMS workers be in Phase 1a of vaccine distribution.

That's why Senator Tedisco and I urged the Governor and Health Commissioner to move-up firefighters and all of New York's emergency first responders to the top tier, Phase 1a of being able to get vaccinated and be protected.

Stewart's Shop grand opening ceremony



Congratulations to the Dake Family and the Town of Moreau as Stewart's cut the ribbon on its 338th store on Route 9 in Moreau! I was proud to be part of today's ceremony, along with Moreau Town Supervisor Todd Kusnierz, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce President Todd Shimkus, Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce President Mike Bittel, and the manager of this

new store.

This brand-new shop features all of our favorite Stewart's products, along with a greater selection of produce, grocery items, and easy food items such as freshly made pizza (pie and by the slice). There is also plenty of seating, extensive parking, and fuel service with diesel, and premium non-ethanol gas. It's always great to celebrate a new business that brings additional employment opportunities, convenience to its customers, and goodwill to the community it serves.

Within the past 34 years, Stewart's Shops have raised an incredible \$30 million for local children's charities. Stewart's "Holiday Match" began Thanksgiving Day and continues through Christmas Day. Donations are collected from customers in the shops and Stewart's matches these donations, dollar-for-dollar. The Holiday Match as of yesterday totaled \$438,390. Congratulations to everyone at Stewart's Shops and thank you for your continued commitment to, and support of, the community!

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THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE