



April 13, 2020

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

Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
State Senate Chamber
Albany, New York 12247

Honorable Carl E. Heastie
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

RE: Hazard Pay for Essential Frontline Workers

Dear Governor Cuomo, Senator Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie:

We write to strongly urge you to establish a temporary hazard pay bonus for essential frontline workers during this difficult and uncertain pandemic. The frontline essential workers risk their lives every day and all New Yorkers owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude. The state should use a portion of the federal stimulus funds provided to New York as a result of the COVID-19 crisis to adequately compensate and support those who are putting their lives on the line so that social distancing can be realized.

In the Executive Order entitled "New York State on Pause," Governor Cuomo set forth a long list of "essential businesses" that can continue to operate during the pandemic, including hospitals, nursing homes, public transportation, and supermarkets. Without the care and sacrifice of our essential frontline workers, many of our critical and most vulnerable residents would not be able to get the help that they need during this critical time. These individuals are being applauded every day at 7 p.m. by those staying at home for a reason. Workers such as health care professionals, grocery store employees, and delivery workers commute long distances, risk exposure of themselves and their household members and may witness illness and death on a daily basis. They are assisting members of our community regardless of age, immigration status and income, and many of these employees are working despite a lack of proper personal protective equipment.

For these reasons, we strongly recommend that you use our state federal stimulus funds to provide a temporary hazard pay bonus for essential frontline workers. Such a step is not only necessary, but the least that we can do to offer compensation for the heroism and enormous risk that our community members are taking to save lives and support our state.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Aravella Simotas
NYS Assembly Member
36th District – Queens



Jessica Ramos
NYS Senator
13th District—Queens