

November 24, 2020

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

**RE: Use Unspent CARES Act Funds for Small Business Grants**

Dear Governor Cuomo:

New York small businesses are suffering due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thousands of small businesses are facing bankruptcy at this time due to a significant decline in economic activity beginning in March of this year. New York State needs to provide grant funding to small businesses so they can remain economically viable until we recover from the pandemic. **We, the undersigned, hereby request New York State use unspent CARES Act funds for small business grants.**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Public Law No: 116-136), a \$2.2 trillion economic stimulus bill, was passed by the Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump on March 27, 2020 in response to the economic crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is still nearly \$2 billion in unspent NY Cares Act funds available of the initial \$5.1 billion in federal funding.<sup>1</sup>

New York should spend CARES Act funds for the purpose of grants to small businesses around the state. This is not just about small businesses. These small businesses employ thousands of workers who rely on a paycheck to survive. Unemployment leads to additional costs to the public besides the pain and suffering experienced by the families of the unemployed. In New York City especially, many minorities, who are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, rely on small businesses for both services and employment.

In a survey conducted this past July by the New York City Comptroller's Office of 500 certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBES), 85% reported they may not be able to be in business in another six months unless they receive assistance either in the form of funding or legislative actions.<sup>2</sup>

Some examples of eligible costs under the CARES Act that could be covered by a small business grant program include the following:

- expenditures to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures;
- economic support for small businesses that close voluntarily to promote social distancing measures; or

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Nonprofits-across-New-York-demand-Cuomo-release-15664565.php>

<sup>2</sup> <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-making-the-grade-mwbe-report-reveals-systemic-barriers-to-competition-exclusionary-contract-language-unresponsive-city-agencies/>

- that are affected by decreased customer demand because of the COVID-19 public health emergency.<sup>3</sup>

Various states are using CARES Act funds for small business grants. On October 23, 2020, the State of Ohio announced \$125 million in CARES Act funding to provide grants to small businesses with no more than 25 employees. These grants will assist businesses to pay for a variety of expenses, including: mortgage or rent payments; utility payments; salaries, wages, or compensation for employees and contractors; business supplies or equipment; and other costs.<sup>4</sup>

We are at the height of the pandemic and the economic crisis and these unspent CARES Act funds need to be used for small business grants as soon as possible. Thank you for your consideration.

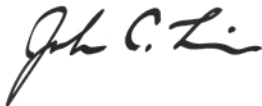
Sincerely yours,



Senator James Sanders Jr.



Senator Leroy Comrie



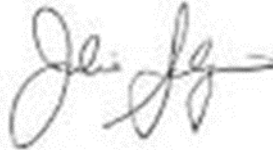
Senator John C. Liu



Senator Robert Jackson



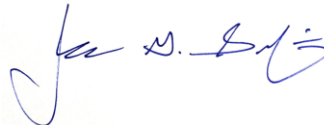
Senator Zellnor Myrie



Senator Julia Salazar



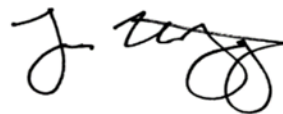
Senator Monica R. Martinez



Senator James Skoufis



Senator Rachel May



Senator Jen Metzger

---

<sup>3</sup> Page 5, U.S. Department of Treasury <<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Guidance-for-State-Territorial-Local-and-Tribal-Governments.pdf>>

<sup>4</sup> <https://governor.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/governor/media/news-and-media/cares-act-funding-announcement-10232020>

Senator Alessandra Biaggi

Assistant Speaker Félix W. Ortiz

Assemblymember Charles Barron

Assemblymember William Colton

Assemblymember Tremaine S. Wright

Assemblymember Karines Reyes

Assemblymember Carmen E. Arroyo

Assemblymember Catalina Cruz

Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez

Assemblymember Mathylde Frontus

Assemblymember Jonathan G. Jacobson

Assemblymember Al Taylor

Assemblymember Steve Stern

Assemblymember Ellen C. Jaffee



Assemblymember Simcha Eichenstein



Assemblymember Clyde Vanel

Assemblymember Khaleel Anderson



NYC Council Member Adrienne Adams



NYC Council Member Margaret Chin

Carolyn McLaughlin  
Albany County Legislator



Nita Brown, Owner/Designer  
MansaWear



National Federation of Independent Business



Ronnie H. Gardner  
Director of Diversity and Affirmative  
Action  
City of Schenectady



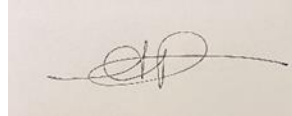
Taryn Hunter, Founder and CEO  
Cattitude Street Strutters and Dog Trains Human Inc.



Karen Tappin, CEO & Beauty Boss  
Karen's Body Beautiful




Jerome Daniel, President & CEO  
Remede Consulting Group, Inc.



Anita Pierce  
Owner Eleven3seven5



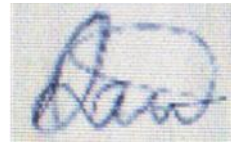
Kevin Melvin, Owner  
Lockdown Security Services



Janique S. Curry  
J.S. Curry & Associates, LLC



Gwen Webber-McLeod, President/CEO  
**Gwen, Inc.**



Danielle Davis, Owner  
**The Dutch Pot LLC**

Anthony M. Gaddy, Founder & CEO  
UpState New York Black Chamber of Commerce

Carmen R Coleman, MBA, Founder and President  
Lifetime Financial Group, LLC

Shaun D. Wiggins, President & CEO  
Soteryx Corp

Margo K. Cargill, Chief Executive Officer  
TITANIUM LINX CONSULTING, INC.

Trent Braaf, CEO & Founder  
Tech Valley Shuttle

Mike Oates, President & CEO  
Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation

Parash Kanwar, Owner  
Fresh West Hill Market

Flerida Santana Johnas, Owner  
Haul it Off Inc and Ikos Management LLC

Josetta Jenkins-Smith  
Owner  
Healing Whispers

Deborah L. Harris, Education Consultant  
Leverage Assessments

Yolanda Sullivan-Hernandez/CEO  
Sullivan-Hernandez Agency, Inc.

Diana A. Benjamin, CEO  
New Genesis Pathfinder, LLC

Kyana Beckles, M.P.S., CEO  
Leverage Assessments, Inc.