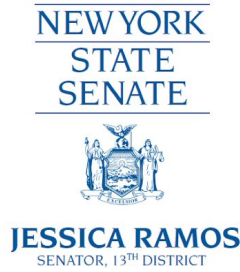


CHAIR
Labor
COMMITTEES
Cities
Consumer Protection
Corporations, Authorities and
Commissions
Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and
Recreation
Transportation



□ **ALBANY OFFICE:**
946 Legislative Office Bldg.
Albany, NY 12247
Phone: (518) 455-2529
□ **DISTRICT OFFICE:**
32-37 Junction Blvd.
East Elmhurst, NY 11369
Phone: (718) 205-3881

April 21st, 2020

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Bill Chong
Commissioner
Department of Youth and Community Development
2 Lafayette Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Chong,

I want to thank you for your leadership during these extraordinary times. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen disruption in education, exponential job loss, and a record number of unemployment insurance claims. As we brace ourselves for the economic changes to come, on behalf of students across New York City, I urge you to protect and expand the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).

Too often, youth are not given a voice in the decisions that directly affect them. The suspension of SYEP is no exception. So, in partnering with [Teens Take Charge](#), this letter highlights the importance of SYEP to the economy and success of our students. Across the city, students, including the over 26,00 who have signed the Teens Take Charge [petition](#) are devastated by the elimination of the 2020 Summer Youth Employment Program. Their voices are not being heard in decision making like this which threatens the financial stability of tens of thousands of students and their families.

As the largest youth employment program in the nation, SYEP is well regarded for its impact on the economy and its students. Through their internships, students can strengthen resumes and college applications while also providing essential funds to families. SYEP is more essential than ever with the interruption of the school year in addition to the COVID-19 financial strain put on families. Many have suffered with the greatest effect on low-income communities of color whom SYEP primarily serves. Critical to many in New York City, the summer program allows students to explore interests, receive

CHAIR
Labor
COMMITTEES
Cities
Consumer Protection
Corporations, Authorities and
Commissions
Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and
Recreation
Transportation

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE



JESSICA RAMOS
SENATOR, 13TH DISTRICT

□ **ALBANY OFFICE:**
946 Legislative Office Bldg.
Albany, NY 12247
Phone: (518) 455-2529
□ **DISTRICT OFFICE:**
32-37 Junction Blvd.
East Elmhurst, NY 11369
Phone: (718) 205-3881

work experience and learn essential-lifelong skills to prepare them for the workforce. All students have lost their 2019-20 school year and some have lost much more in this pandemic. I urge you to stand up for the rights of students and continue providing this essential program.

Understanding the complexity of emergency budget changes and the challenging decisions that must be made, SYEP has been a proven financial stimulus with the 2009 expansion following the 2008 financial crisis. With no end in sight to mandated business closures, SYEP may not be able to exist in the way that it has in previous years but can sustain. Many CBOs have created contingency plans that would enable youth workers to obtain an optimal remote summer experience. If we were able to shift 1.1 million students to remote learning in one week, we can put 75,000 students in online jobs and internships in two and a half months. If self-isolation and quarantine continues into summer, SYEP will encourage social distancing as students stay home keeping busy with work. This would be an opportunity for New York students to actively participate in public health and stimulate the economy in a time of need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Ramos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Jessica Ramos
13th Senatorial District