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CONTACT: Paul Pfeiffer

716-854-8705

JACOBS PROPOSES LEGISLATION TO PREVENT COVID-19 SCAMS

*Legislation would significantly increase penalties for scammers
taking advantage of coronavirus crisis*

(Buffalo, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs is proposing legislation to dramatically increase the penalties against anyone who commits a scam by taking advantage of the coronavirus crisis.

“Unfortunately, at a time when people are afraid for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, we have unscrupulous people and businesses who would take advantage of this crisis to price gouge and steal money from unwitting victims,” said Jacobs. “I want to send a strong message to either deter these criminals or make sure they pay dearly for these heartless acts.”

Countless stories have been reported of COVID-19 scams, such as price gouging of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), on-line scams regarding federal stimulus checks, and even offering fake COVID test kits. Jacobs’ legislation could add as much as an additional year in jail time for a criminal act of a COVID-19 scam, and fines for civil violations could double or even triple in some cases.

“There are few things more despicable than preying on frightened, vulnerable and sick people during a crisis like this,” said Jacobs. “I hope these increased penalties will deter criminals from even initiating a COVID scam, but if they do the crime this legislation makes sure they pay a severe price,” the Senator concluded.

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