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**STATE**  
**SENATE**



**SENATOR**  
**FREDERICK J. AKSHAR II**  
52<sup>ND</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

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April 28, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of the State of New York  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Thank you for your continued leadership during this terrible time for New Yorkers and our entire nation.

I'm writing to shine a bright light on the most pressing issue exacerbating our collective constituency's struggle to make ends meet and keep their bills paid during this continued health crisis: Widespread unemployment insurance and pandemic unemployment assistance delays.

I've heard from thousands of Southern Tier residents who still haven't received their assured benefits, specifically self-employed individuals who work incredibly hard to support our local economy. I'm talking about hair salon owners, realtors, auto repair shop operators, home healthcare aides, and many more.

I'm well aware of the dramatic increase in calls that the NYS Department of Labor has received over the past several weeks and I greatly appreciate all the steps that you and Commissioner Reardon have taken to improve processing. I'm especially grateful to the hundreds of DOL employees, many from our own 52nd Senate District, who've worked tirelessly over the past several weeks to process as many claims as possible. But sadly, promises were made to those who lost their jobs at no fault of their own, and those promises haven't been kept for countless New Yorkers.

It's my understanding that the U.S. government was initially going to be responsible for administering the federally-funded PUA program until amendments were made in the final enacted legislation. In my humble opinion, states were unprepared for this responsibility and it should have been left to our US Department of Labor to handle the disbursement of these benefits.

While I recognize your inability to effectuate this type of change at the federal level, I'd respectfully ask that you continue to allocate more resources to Commissioner Reardon's team and collaborate with executive agencies in Washington so we can get the job done for thousands who are struggling to make ends meet.

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your team as we navigate this incredibly difficult challenge on behalf of the people we both proudly serve.

All the best,



Frederick J. Akshar II  
52<sup>nd</sup> Senate District

CC: NYS Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon