

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming's Statement on the 2020 NYS Budget

Residents throughout our community are staying inside -- doing their best to protect the health of their families, their friends, and people they may never know. Others are working around the clock. Their mission is to keep us safe, to keep us fed and to defeat this virus. Every front-line worker from our health care providers, our police and firefighters, our EMS and correction officers,, our National Guard, our local grocers, our family farmers, our truckers, our delivery drivers, our schools who continue to educate and feed those in need and so many more deserve our thanks and praise. Everyone is doing their part to bring this pandemic to an end.

As state legislators, it is our job to focus on the priority needs of our communities. At a time when more than 90,000 New Yorkers have been diagnosed with the Coronavirus and more than 2,300 have died, our budget should have provided the resources every community needs to combat this pandemic. Sadly, the budget fails to do this.

We all understand that sacrifices need to be made in order to deal with the reality of New York's current healthcare crisis and financial situation. However, this budget cuts necessities. It is bad for our community healthcare providers and hospitals, our schools and infrastructure. The budget provides no relief to small business and working people. It shifts more financial burden from the state to local government. The bottom line is this budget fails the people we were elected to serve, which is why I voted against it.

This pandemic presented an opportunity for all parties to work together and to deal with the real issues facing everyday people. Instead, the downstate Democrat leaders conducted 'worse than the usual' behind the scenes negotiating and scheduled voting for the middle of the night. The public was completely shut out. This is not democracy; it is not representative government.

When the immediate crisis passes, it is imperative that these same leaders reconvene the Legislature. We have much more work to do. And it begins with reviewing the recently adopted policy and the resource allocation in full public view.

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