



THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY 12247

May 12, 2022

Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Commissioner Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
NYS Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Governor Hochul and Commissioner Bassett:

We write to you today seeking immediate action and the full resources of the state to address the widespread baby formula shortage affecting New York. As you may or may not be aware, this shortage has reached crisis proportions across our entire country. In recent weeks, we have heard from countless families in our districts about empty store and pharmacy shelves – and parents with nowhere left to turn.

As parents ourselves, we fully understand the struggles facing those raising newborns and infants on a day-to-day basis. No mother or father should ever have to worry about whether or not they can feed their infant child.

We acknowledge this is a nationwide issue. However, we must not wait for the federal government to take action. There are many questions our state must consider at such a critical juncture in this growing crisis, including:

- How is the state currently working to address this shortage, and the concerns of parents and families alike?
- Is the state working with our federal government to address this shortage and if so, how?

- Do we have a government stockpile of baby formula in our state? If so, how can we efficiently distribute it to those most in need? And if not, why not?
- Is there anything else the state can do financially or otherwise to immediately procure/distribute formula to struggling households?

We also propose some common-sense options to consider at the state level to alleviate the concerns of parents, including:

- Public-private partnership(s) with food banks, charitable organizations, and other non-profits with access to baby formula;
- Statewide educational campaign(s) on best ways for struggling parents to obtain formula, as well as best public health practices for infant children;
- Utilizing Department of Agriculture and Markets as well as Empire State Development to offer incentives for formula manufacturers within our state;
- Urging the Attorney General to not only warn retailers and monitor cases of price gouging of formula, but to prosecute to the fullest extent.

It is the job of the Health Department to ensure public health in our state, and there is no greater issue in our state than the health of our children. Again, we understand this is a nationwide issue. But New York should not wait for the federal government to act – we must act now.

Sincerely,



Senator Sue Serino
41st District



Senator Daphne Jordan
43rd District



Senator Mike Martucci
42nd District