



NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

September 24, 2020

Dear Member of the New York State Congressional Delegation:

As you negotiate the next round of federal coronavirus stimulus legislation, we urge you to include direct financial assistance for state and local governments in the final bill. New York State and local governments are reeling from the revenue loss caused by the pandemic. Without federal assistance, Albany Democrats are poised to deliver devastating tax increases, sharp reductions in services or some combination thereof.

We are already experiencing the financial impacts of the pandemic on our state budget. With no appetite to cut wasteful programs like botched economic development subsidies, a bloated state bureaucracy, or taxpayer-funded political campaigns; the Governor has begun (and Democrats have allowed) withholding critical state aid to school districts, local governments, and non-profits. Needed infrastructure investments around the state are on hold, and furloughs and layoffs have become all too common.

However, these drastic cuts have still not filled the revenue gap left by the pandemic. Many Albany Democrats have long supported increasing New York's taxes – already among the highest in the nation – and are using the pandemic as an opportunity. New taxes are the last thing New York's small businesses, working families, and seniors need after a year of financial hardships. This move will only exacerbate New York's nation-leading outmigration.

Make no mistake; New York faced billion-dollar deficits prior to the pandemic due to reckless spending and dishonest revenue projections. Had the state been managed prudently, we would find ourselves better positioned to handle the magnitude of the current fiscal crisis. However, the stakes are too high and local governments, workers, small businesses, students, and service providers should not be penalized for Democrats' prior mismanagement.

To preserve critical government services and prevent devastating state tax hikes, we urge you to set aside national politics to deliver a coronavirus stimulus package. The Problem Solvers' Caucus recently released a proposal that should serve as a blueprint for our federal representatives. It will provide direct aid to state and local governments, enhanced unemployment benefits, stimulus checks targeted to working families, small business loans, as well as funding for schools and testing. This compromise is a worthy investment that will help our workers and small businesses while protecting schools, law enforcement, and other critical services. Thank you for your time and feel free to reach out to us if you wish to further discuss this, or any matter.

Respectfully,



Robert G. Ort

Senate Republican Leader



Will Barclay

Assembly Republican Leader

CC:

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