

George Latimer
County Executive

CONGRESS MUST PASS ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION TO FUND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND PROVIDE LIABILITY PROTECTION TO RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Members of New York's Congressional Delegation:

The undersigned organizations, which collectively represent a comprehensive array of statewide interests across the business, labor and nonprofit sectors, call upon our federal representatives to pass additional and immediate stimulus legislation to provide full funding to state and local governments in response to the financial devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Congress must act to protect organizations that are taking State and Federal recommended steps to follow health and safety guidelines for protecting customers and workers.

Financial Support for State and Local Governments

New York has been the hardest to be hit by COVID-19 and New York's businesses, nonprofits and workers have stepped up. They have endured unprecedented restrictions by closing their doors to patrons and self-quarantining while revenues and wages hemorrhage. As a result of these sacrifices, New York has gone from the global epicenter of the pandemic to a study in shared civil responsibility. In the process, we have taken the biggest economic hit and digested the greatest personal toll in the United States.

In April, the bipartisan National Governors Association estimated that at least \$500 billion in direct federal aid to state and local governments was necessary simply to replace lost revenue necessary to provide basic services. The ensuing two months have brought further financial disruption. As a result, much more is required.

This is not a bail out for prior financial indiscretions or self-inflicted budget wounds. Rather, it is critical support to replace lost receipts and to absorb additional expenditures directly tied to the pandemic—a sudden and insidious disease that has taken an outsized toll on New York and for which New Yorkers continue to pay an enormous price. Every source of revenue at the state and local level is affected just as the costs of healthcare, emergency response, and unemployment claims are facing an historic surge.

If you do not act to pass legislation, critical programs and services will be slashed by 20 to 30 percent. That means cuts to schools, Medicaid, aid to municipalities, property tax relief for homeowners, child-care, colleges and universities, agricultural support, environmental programs, aid to seniors, and veterans programs, among others. Unemployment, which has more than tripled statewide to 15 percent, will continue to increase as our public workforce will be axed, shuttered small businesses will not re-open and new developments will grind to a halt. The already challenging road to economic recovery will be needlessly extended and severely compromised.

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Liability Protection for Responsible Organizations As New York begins to reopen its economy, organizations are faced with unprecedented legal uncertainty and liability risk. Even organizations taking responsible efforts to comply with constantly evolving health-based guidance will find themselves in legal jeopardy. Industries as diverse as health care, higher education, hospitality, food services, retail, real estate, and construction should not be forced to face COVID-19 related litigation from clients they serve or employees in addition to the financial challenges created by the pandemic.

Congress must act to provide organizations and employers with targeted, temporary and limited safe harbors for health-related claims filed during and in the wake of the pandemic. Liability protection should apply only where widely accepted health-based guidelines specific to operations are followed. Reckless acts and omissions and acts of bad faith deserve no protection. Targeted liability protection will create legal certainty for employers, employees, and patrons alike, will prevent a hodgepodge of inconsistent legal interpretations and waiver requirements, and will help accelerate New York's economic recovery.

The time to act is now and we are looking to your leadership to stand strong for New York.

Respectfully,

Catherine Parker and Louis Lanza
Co-Chairs, Westchester County Reopening Task Force

Westchester County Reopening Task Force Members	
Name	Affiliation
Michael Romita	President and CEO, Westchester County Association
Amy Allen	Vice President, Westchester County Association
Marsha Gordon	President and CEO, Business Council of Westchester
John Ravitz	Vice President and COO, Business Council of Westchester
Ross Pepe	Construction Industry Council
John Cooney	Executive Director, Construction Industry Council
Peter Herrero	Founder, GM, NY Hospitality Group
Seane Meade	General Manager of Cambria Suites in White Plains, President of the Westchester Hotel Association
Janet Langsam	CEO ArtsWestchester
Carola Bracco	Executive Director, Neighbors Link
Jan Fisher	Executive Director, Nonprofit Westchester
Thomas Carey	Business Agent, Plumbers & Steamfitters HVACR Service, Local 21
Ed Doyle	Building and Construction Trades Council President and Treasurer

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Westchester County Reopening Task Force Members	
Name	Affiliation
Susan Fox	President and CEO, White Plains Hospital
Lindsay Farrell	President and CEO, Open Door
Joe Simone	Simone Development
Marty Berger	Saber Real Estate Advisors
Seamus Carey	President, Iona College
James Bostic	Youth, Nepperhan Community Center
Eddie Monroy	Westchester Hispanic Chamber
Nick Campbell	Rivertowns Chamber of Commerce
Gayle Marchica	Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce
Catherine White	New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce
Rabbi Daniel Gropper	Community Synagogue of Rye, Representative of the Westchester Board of Rabbis
Reverend Erwin Trollinger	Calvary Baptist Church, White Plains

Supporting Organizations and Individuals
AGC New York State
Arts NYS
ArtsWestchester
Associated Builders and Contractors NYS
Association of Nonprofit Specialists
B.A.C. Local #7 Tile, Marble, Terrazzo - Matthew Guy, Secretary Treasurer
Boilermakers Local 5 – Thomas F. Ryan
BRI Westchester and Mid-Hudson
Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local Union No. 1 New York
Brightside Up
Bronx Chamber of Commerce
Buffalo Niagara Partnership
Building Contractors Association of Westchester and Mid-Hudson
Building Contractors Association of Westchester and Mid-Hudson, F. Matthew Pepe, Executive Director
Business Council of NYS
Business Council of Westchester
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New York

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Supporting Organizations and Individuals
Chautauqua Opportunities Inc., Diane G. Hewitt-Johnson Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.
Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc.
Child Care Council of Westchester, Inc.
Child Care Solutions
Citymeals on Wheels
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities in New York
Construction Industry Council Westchester & Hudson Valley Inc.
Early Care and Learning Council
Edgemont Union Free School District, Victoria S. Kniewel, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools
Edward Williams Elementary School, Jackie Byrd, Administrative Assistant
Goodwill NY NJ
Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce
Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce
HANYS
Human Services Council
Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation
International Union of Operating Engineers Local Unions No. 137, 137A, 137B, 137C 137R – Jeff Loughlin, Business Manager
Irvington Union Free School District, Kristopher Harrison, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, Laborers’ International Union of North America, Local 60 - Anthony Ascencao, Business Manager
Laborers’ International Union of North America, Local 235 – Dario Boccarossa, Business Manager, Secretary Treasurer
Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York
Local 21 Plumbers/Steamfitters/HVACR Service – Frank R. Palen, Business Manager
Local Union No. 813, Affiliated with International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Mental health Association of New York
Mount Vernon Board of Education, Sonia Gregory, Senior Typist, Office of the Superintendent
Mount Vernon City School District, Elizabeth Smith, Literary Specialist
Mount Vernon City School District, Marguerita G. Circello, Ed. D, Standards Administrator, ENL & World Languages K-12 Dept.
Mount Vernon School District, Christopher Moll, teacher

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Supporting Organizations and Individuals
Mount Vernon School District, Laura Grosso, Library Media Specialist, Mt Vernon STEAM Academy
Mount Vernon City School District, Phyllis Griffin, Administrative Assistant, Technology Department
New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce
New York Association of Convenience Stores
New York Electrical Contractors Association Inc.
New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association
New York State Wide Senior Action Council, Inc.
Nonprofit Westchester
Peekskill Business Improvement District
Pocantico Hills Central School District, Richard Calkins Superintendent
Saber Real Estate North, LLC
Scarsdale Union Free School District, Dr. Thomas Hagerman, Superintendent of Schools
Staten Island NFP Association
Suburban Hospital Alliance of New York State, LLC
Teamsters Local 456 - Lou Picani, President
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, New York City & Vicinity District Council of Carpenters
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Dockbuilders – Timbermen, Local 1556
Urban Land Institute Westchester/Fairfield
Westchester County Association
Westchester County Government
Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Westchester Municipal Officials Association

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IRVINGTON
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



**Lawsuit Reform Alliance
of New York**

Justice. Fairness. Common Sense.



**Long Island
Hispanic
Chamber of
Commerce, Inc.**



**Lawsuit Reform Alliance
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HEALTHY MINDS FOR A HEALTHY NEW YORK



**Child Care Council
of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.**

Connecting Communities and Children



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**Suburban
Hospital Alliance**
of New York State, LLC

