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THE SENATE
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December 9, 2020

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Pursuant to subdivision six of §652 of the Labor Law, the Commissioner of Labor based upon a report and recommendation from the Director of the Budget, can temporarily suspend any scheduled increases to the minimum wage.

The minimum wage is scheduled to increase on December 31, 2020 from the current hourly rate of \$13 per hour to the statutorily scheduled rate of \$14 per hour on Long Island and Westchester County. It is also scheduled to increase from \$11.80 to \$12.50 per hour in the rest of the state outside of New York City, which currently has a minimum wage \$15 per hour.

The Senate Republican Conference has always stood by businesses, particularly small and mid-sized businesses that are the backbone of the State's economy.

We believe that any increase to the minimum wage would have great and far-reaching consequences for businesses that are only barely staying afloat in the current state of this pandemic. According to the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB), 90 percent of small businesses that received Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans have entirely spent down those funds and are ready to initiate the process for loan forgiveness. PPP is a federal program designed to provide an incentive to small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll. Even with PPP and other programs, according to NFIB, approximately 20 percent of small business owners predict that they will go out of business in the next six months and another 19 percent anticipate that they will be out of business within a year. **Any increases to the minimum wage are certain to exacerbate this problem.**

We understand that countless individuals have struggled during this pandemic and continue to struggle. However, based upon the above and the best information available to us, we believe that increasing the minimum wage in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic would do more harm than good to those we represent. The state must avoid inflicting additional economic hardship on

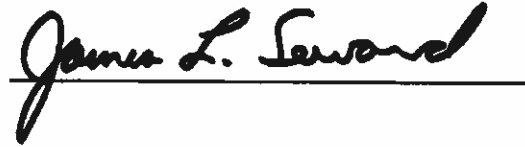
businesses and causing many small and medium size businesses, especially family-owned restaurants, to go out of business entirely - hurting businesses and workers alike.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you use your statutory authority to delay all increases in the minimum wage until the Covid-19 pandemic ends.

Sincerely,



Senator Robert G. Ort



Senator James L. Seward




Senator Fred Akshar



Senator Thomas F. O'Mara



Senator Daphne Jordan



Senator Rich Funke



Senator George M. Borello



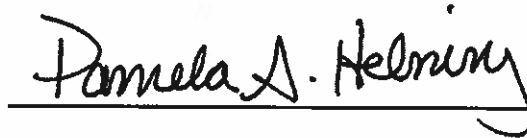
Senator Sue Serino



Senator Betty Little



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan



Senator Pamela Helming



Senator Patty Ritchie