



March 17, 2020

The Honorable
Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

The Honorable
Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader
New York Senate
Legislative Office Building 907
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable
Carl Heastie
Speaker
New York Assembly
Legislative Office Building 932
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Cuomo, Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie:

As you know, the COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on every New Yorker. Schools and businesses have closed, employers and workers are worried about their futures, and state government is focused on managing a rapidly changing situation. Given the enormity of the task at hand it is critical that the state's attention be focused on the current crisis, and not on rushing through unrelated policy issues in an accelerated budget process.

This current crisis is going to have a major effect on the New York economy. Many businesses are already experiencing financial hardship as customers isolate and state government begins issuing restrictions intended to stop the spread. The next few months are going to be very difficult.

The focus now should be on passing a limited budget that allows the state to have the resources needed to address this ongoing crisis. Rushing through major policy issues, many of which may have a significant impact on the state's businesses climate, would be irresponsible at this time.

Taxpayers, businesses and other stakeholders deserve the opportunity to review and weigh-in on the contents of the state budget. With the Capitol closed and everyone's attention elsewhere, now is not the time to rush through a state budget that includes non-budgetary policy items.

On behalf taxpayers and employers throughout Upstate New York we strongly urge you to focus on the immediate spending needs of the state and remove any policies from the state budget negotiations.

Sincerely,

Michael Kracker
Executive Director
Unshackle Upstate