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**THANK YOU**  
*Hometown Heroes!*

# DEAR

# *Neighbors:*



**This year's legislative session was one of the most crucial in our state's modern history.**

Lawmakers had the opportunity to make decisions at our state Capitol to set New York State on a new course of recovery following the pandemic, a path of prosperity for everyone. And a path that is much-needed after a very difficult year of economic shutdown and uncertainty.

The bloated, record-breaking spending in the state budget was a missed opportunity to do something substantial for our economy. Instead of reimagining how our state could move forward or do business in this new, post-pandemic world, or reducing our state debt, the majorities maintained the status quo in Albany.

However, I was pleased to see long-overdue funding provided for programs I have advocated for like our libraries, local roads, veterans peer counseling programs, an expansion of Nourish NY, and funding for a broadband study I helped pass in 2020. But these increases are literally a drop in the bucket overall when examining the budget-busting \$212 billion spent this year that will indebt future generations of New Yorkers and is, frankly, unsustainable. We had an opportunity with the one-

time stimulus investment funds from Washington to change course for our state, and Albany failed to take it. **That's why I voted against the budget in its entirety.**

Outside of the budget, I was successful in reaching across the aisle to work together with like-minded colleagues in order to gain passage of some important bills that I believe will benefit the people of our district. In this newsletter, you can learn more about those measures and my legislation to help move our state forward at this crucial time.

As always, it is my pleasure and honor to serve you. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office. For more timely updates, please sign up for my e-newsletter by emailing me at [norrism@nyassembly.gov](mailto:norrism@nyassembly.gov) or follow me on social media.

**Working for you,**

*Michael J. Norris*

# AROUND TOWN

*With Mike!*

THANK YOU HOMETOWN HEROES!



## LEADING THE CHARGE FOR A RECOVERY PLAN FOR NY BUSINESSES

The COVID-19 pandemic hit New Yorkers hard, and small businesses that were shut down due to no fault of their own were particularly hard hit. Unable to work, conduct business, or know what to tell their employees, vendors, or customers for months, generations of small businesses were destroyed overnight. Mike Norris knew something had to be done. Norris got to work on an emergency relief package that reimagines how existing state funds that were not being used could help keep these employers afloat in order to protect our local and regional Main Street economy.

Known as the New York Business Emergency Relief Act (A.4692), Mike's plan was supported by his entire Conference and by members

across the state from Buffalo to Long Island. His bill was included in their omnibus plan, Jump-Start New York: A Plan for Economic Recovery, a 17-point economic recovery platform that also called for the restoration of legislative authority and an end to the governor's temporary emergency powers. Mike's plan was an important blueprint for the bipartisan package that was adopted, which included \$800 million to micro-businesses (10 employees or fewer), small businesses (100 employees or fewer) and for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations (100 employees or fewer).

But Mike knows more needs to be done... that's why he's still working with his colleagues to do more. He's working on an expansion of a

### Highlights of Mike's business recovery plan included:

- ✓ Grants for businesses with 250 or fewer employees that were forced to shutdown
- ✓ Grants would equal the likely net income lost as a result of the state deeming them "non-essential" or having limited services
- ✓ Funding would come from unallocated settlement funding and repurposing funding from existing economic development programs that were not used during the pandemic



farm-to-table food security program similar to the Nourish NY program with a new task force, fought to include the Broadband Connectivity Act and increased infrastructure funding in this year's budget, and he is also continuing his efforts to promote workforce development initiatives as the Chair of the Assembly Minority Conference's Learning for Work Task Force. Stay tuned for more details on that soon!



## WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER RESULTS



As our Assemblyman, Mike Norris isn't just working hard in our district – he's also working hard at the state Capitol to reach across the aisle and make connections to help advance the priorities that will make a difference in our daily lives. Mike understands leadership, but also how to work together. He has the respect of his colleagues and that's why he's been successful in delivering on so many legislative matters for us. Some of his legislative accomplishments this session include:

✓ **THE NEW YORK STATE AID AND INCENTIVES FOR MUNICIPALITIES REDESIGN TASK FORCE:** This task force is important to taxpayers because it has the opportunity to evaluate and reformulate how state aid is provided to cities, towns, and villages. It's an undertaking that has not happened in decades, and one that should even out the existing, unfair disadvantage in the funding formula that can result in higher taxes in upstate towns and villages (especially in rural communities). (A.6601)

✓ **HELPING VETERANS:** In addition to advocating for funding for our veterans programs, Mike sponsored dozens of veteran-specific measures and helped pass a bill in both houses that will make it easier for veterans to be aware of available benefits by alerting them every time they renew or apply for a license. (A.3920)

✓ **NEW AGRICULTURAL MINORITY TASK FORCE:** To further expand on the success of programs like Nourish NY to assist agriculture in our state, Mike joined his colleagues in launching a new Minority task force to advance farm-to-market initiatives and also sponsored legislation that was signed into law to support farmers' right-to-farm protections when hiring agricultural operators. (A.1889)

✓ **SUPPORTING VOLUNTEER FIRST RESPONDERS:** Mike is a big supporter of our local fire companies and emergency medical technicians. This year, among the many legislative initiatives he worked on to protect both the public and our brave firefighters, Mike voted in support of lifesaving legislation that will ban the use of dangerous chemical flame retardants, which not only cause increased amounts of carbon monoxide in structural fires and lead to more deaths but also have been proven to cause cancer and immune diseases. (A.5418)

✓ **END CHILDHOOD DROWNING & HELP MAKE SWIMMING LESSONS MORE AFFORDABLE:** Mike also worked across the aisle to pass legislation to create a commission to study childhood drowning, help create awareness of this problem, and better connect people with swimming lessons. As drowning is the number one cause of death in young children, and drowning deaths were on the rise during the pandemic, Mike was able to move this measure along quickly to help reduce the number of these preventable deaths. Mike believes everyone should have the opportunity to learn to swim, as it is an essential, lifesaving skill. (A.7734)



**Mike Norris works hard for us!** During the pandemic, he and his staff worked day and night to answer hundreds of phone calls and emails. His staff handled hundreds of cases regarding unemployment, businesses affected by the pandemic, local government assistance, and much more. Though the pandemic is subsiding, please know that Mike and his team are here for you. If you need help with any state issue, please contact them:

**Assemblyman Mike Norris**  
**8180 Main Street**  
**Clarence, NY 14221**  
**(716) 839-4691**  
**norrism@nyassembly.gov**



**Assemblyman**  
**MIKE NORRIS**

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**A NEWSLETTER UPDATE**



**ASSEMBLYMAN**  
**MIKE NORRIS**  
*Working for Us*  
 Assemblyman  
**MIKE NORRIS**

*Learn More Inside!*

\*Nominated by the community, individuals were honored as Hometown Heroes by Assemblyman Mike Norris for their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**“ I am so honored on behalf of all of the people in our district to honor these individuals who went above and beyond the call of duty during the COVID-19 pandemic. From working around the clock to hand-making thousands of masks – you are the best of Western New York. Thank you to all of the front line workers, health care personnel, small businesses, and community volunteers that gave of themselves to serve others. ”**

**Assemblyman**  
**MIKE NORRIS**

