



For Release: **IMMEDIATELY**, August 13, 2020

Contact: Mike Fraser, office: (518) 455-3751/cell: (518) 859-8518

Candice Giove, office: (518) 455-2264/cell: (347) 866-6742

REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS ANNOUNCE
ADDITIONAL FORUMS ON NURSING HOMES,
ASSISTED LIVING & LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES & COVID-19

Assembly Minority Leader Will Barclay and Senate Minority Leader Rob Ortton today announced Republican-led forums to gain additional insight and information on the impacts of COVID-19 in New York's nursing homes and residential care facilities.

All members of the Assembly and Senate Standing Committees on Health, Aging and Investigations will be invited to participate in an upcoming event to be held on Monday, August 17, at 10 a.m. The proceeding will be conducted virtually, with additional regional sessions to follow later in the year.

"If we've learned anything from the first two nursing home hearings, it's that the discussion is far from over. We have heard from a number of individuals and organizations who wanted to come forward and share their experiences, but simply were not given the opportunity to do so," Leader Barclay said. "Holding legislative hearings was important, but there is no reason to limit the conversations to only two events on an issue that impacted so many thousands of lives. After the health commissioner's evasive testimony, after legislators were denied a chance to ask questions, after witnesses were pulled off of invitation lists, our Conference promised that we were not done listening. Monday's forum, and those that will follow, demonstrate our commitment to those individuals still waiting to be heard."

“Thousands of New Yorkers died in nursing homes and adult care facilities, and the state has yet to provide proper context to the full extent of the issue,” Leader Ort said. “For more than three months, Senate Republicans called for hearings and an independent investigation to uncover the truth about what happened in our state’s nursing homes. Despite two prior hearings, there is clearly more work to be done. This is too critical of an issue to simply walk away and close the door. Even without full transparency and cooperation from the Cuomo Administration, grieving families deserve to be heard.”

Janice Dean, whose mother-in-law and father-in-law both died from COVID-19 while living in elderly care facilities, will provide testimony during Monday’s hearing. Ms. Dean, a Fox News meteorologist who has been vocal about the state’s handling of COVID-19 in nursing homes, was originally informed she would appear at the August 10 hearing. However, Majority members later reversed that decision in the days leading up to the hearing and refused to allow Ms. Dean to provide testimony.

In a joint legislative hearing held on August 3, Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker left after taking questions for less than two hours, and refused to provide the full death toll of nursing home residents who were infected by COVID-19. He did not testify at the second hearing, held on August 10.