

DISTRICT OFFICES
2015 STILLWELL AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11223
(718) 307-7151

445 NEPTUNE AVENUE
COMMUNITY ROOM 2C
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11224



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MARK TREYGER

CHAIR
EDUCATION
COMMITTEES
AGING
GENERAL WELFARE
LAND USE
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

January 13, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
New York State Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing in regards to the financial devastation and economic conditions for businesses struggling to survive in the amusement district of Coney Island, Brooklyn. As we continue to navigate the coronavirus pandemic, it is imperative that the State issue guidance and protocols immediately on how to safely reopen outdoor amusements for the 2021 season, which would begin on Palm Sunday, March 28, less than three months from today.

As you know, prior to COVID-19, Coney Island welcomed over 7 million visitors to the neighborhood annually, creating a significant boost to the local economy. The amusement district relies on the summer months between May and September to generate its revenue for the entire year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the local amusements were forced to remain closed under the New York State PAUSE order, even after New York City entered into phase four and despite outdoor activities having a lesser rate of transmission. The 2020 season was the first time in history that the amusement district was closed. While indoor activities such as casinos, gyms, museums and spa services reopened to the public during the summer, the State refused to lift the ban on outdoor amusements, eliminating any opportunity for the businesses to operate during the peak tourist and visitor months.

It is reported widely that this past season resulted in an [estimate of at least \\$100 million in revenue loss](#) for the Coney Island amusement district. In addition to the financial loss, [nearly 2,000 local residents](#) normally employed seasonally in the amusement district are still without job security and economic

relief, adding to the 30% unemployment rate in Coney Island alone. Our local businesses are desperate to receive official instruction to plan ahead for the 2021 season and welcome a dialogue with the State to prevent another financial crisis for the local community.

I urge you to immediately draft reopening guidance for outdoor amusements and consider the additional emergency relief options below:

- The New York State Legislature should pass legislation to require insurance companies to pay business interruption insurance claims.
- The NYS Regional Economic Development Council should advance a plan for Southern Brooklyn relief and recovery.
- The New York Forward Loan Fund should allow businesses with over 100 employees to be eligible for financial support.
- When NYS Economic Development grants start flowing again, they should prioritize anchor institutions that were closed for the longest time.

The future of the Coney Island amusement district remains uncertain until emergency assistance is provided. I've outlined tenable solutions to providing immediate relief and request that you issue reopening guidelines for outdoor amusements so that our struggling businesses can safely operate once again. We must ensure our amusement district in Coney Island remains an integral part of our community for another 100 years to come.

Thank you for your continued efforts to protect New Yorkers. I look forward to discussing how we can take measures to safely bring back this historic entertainment industry and the thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue generated each year prior to the pandemic.

Sincerely,



Mark Treyger
NYC Council Member, 47th District Brooklyn
Bensonhurst, Coney Island, Gravesend, Sea Gate

cc: Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health

Dr. Dave Chokshi, Commissioner, NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene