



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE THEMIS KLARIDES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

REPUBLICAN LEADER

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June 11, 2020

Speaker Joe Aresimowicz
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

President Pro Tempore Martin Looney
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

House Majority Leader Matt Ritter
Legislative Office Building
Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff
Legislative Office Building 300
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Leaders,

Thank you for sharing with us your recent letters to Governor Lamont and for joining us in our calls for the Governor to make a greater effort to collaborate with the legislature. We, however, were disappointed that this request to "work together" did not include Republicans. To us, working together means setting aside party labels to solve problems for all of our residents, not just for people represented by one political party.

It is a tragedy that, just as we appear to be emerging from the pandemic, the recent and heinous actions in Minneapolis, Minnesota have created a social divide, the likes of which our country has not seen in over half a century. Those actions have prompted every state to look inward and reexamine their law enforcement systems and to develop reasoned solutions to flaws that may be identified. Here, in Connecticut, this is going to require us to work together, to have difficult conversations, and to make difficult decisions.

While the correspondence between you and the Governor focused solely on the issues of absentee ballots and law enforcement, we believe that there is additional time-sensitive issues that should be addressed. On May 27th, the House Republican caucus issued a statement announcing our intention to petition the House of Representatives into special session to

address, among other items, the allocation of federal relief funding. We also believe in light of the Governor's recent refusal to delay raises for state workers for 90 days while we assess our budget shortfall resulting from the government shutdown, the legislature needs to take action to temporarily suspend this expenditure. To not act, undoubtedly puts a greater tax strain on re-employment of workers whose companies will be faced with minimum wage increases, property and sales tax payments and permit fee bills on or around September 1, at a time when our economy is beginning its climb out of this protracted shutdown. We are concerned that the administration will spend more money allocated through the \$1.4 billion in Coronavirus Relief Fund that do not take these important needs into consideration, thus stalling any meaningful economic recovery for our state, and the lack of transparency from this administration only continues to erode the public's confidence in the decision-making.

We should not assume that the Governor will make all the right decisions when it comes to repealing or continuing executive order provisions. A special session also would give us the opportunity to create a bi-partisan legislative commission charged with reviewing executive orders issued by the Governor. We can agree that, under the circumstances at the time when each of the orders was adopted, a large majority of the orders are/were necessary. As the pandemic subsides, most of the executive orders should be repealed. However, there will be pressure to make some of them permanent. A bi-partisan legislative commission would be set up to review and debate all aspects of the executive orders and to make recommendations to the full General Assembly.

We understand that the health and safety of members, staff, and the public are paramount. However, just like businesses and families, we need to adapt to this new reality, and we believe that we can create a modified process and environment that is in keeping with physical distancing rules, yet, still, allows us to re-establish ourselves in the policy-making process. We look forward to working with you to accomplishing this and to the prospect of a special session.

Sincerely,



Themis

