



Chemung County Chamber of Commerce

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Media Contact: Emily Hoffman, Executive Assistant & Affairs Advisor

emily@chemungchamber.org | Phone: (607) 734-5137 | Fax: (607) 734-4490

CHAMBER ADVOCATES FOR SOUTHERN TIER BUSINESSES & WORKFORCE RESIDING IN PA Chemung Chamber Asks State Officials for Guidance; NYS Travel Advisory Workforce Implications

[ELMIRA, NY] – On Thursday, July 30th, The Chemung County Chamber of Commerce, in concert with Central Steuben Chamber of Commerce and Corning Area Chamber of Commerce, reached out with a letter to Governor Cuomo and a second letter to Senator O’Mara, Assemblyman Friend and Assemblyman Palmesano in an effort to shine a light on a potential major economic issue arising from the NYS Travel Advisory that could quarantine Pennsylvania workers for 14 days, leaving Southern Tier Companies in a quandary. More than 40 Southern Tier Companies joined in the petition, lead by the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce.

Kamala Keeley, President & CEO, wrote, in part, “a significant portion of the Southern Tier workforce resides in Pennsylvania. According to the 2011-2015 5 Year American Community Survey Commuting Flows report, more than 2,700 residents of Pennsylvania are employed by Chemung County businesses and nearly 9,500 are employed within the region. Furthermore, more than 6,300 Southern Tier residents work in Pennsylvania. Our local economy and economic success is tied to our ability to employ across borders. If Pennsylvania were to reach a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average or a testing positivity rate of higher than a 10% over a seven-day rolling average and be added to the travel advisory, our local industry would fail. Proactively, we are asking that guidelines with further clarification on this issue be put into place to allow business the opportunity to plan for workforce protocols in the worst-case scenario. As employers in the Southern Tier struggle to sustain and even revitalize our economy during this crisis, losing our skilled workforce due to a mandated quarantine would be detrimental beyond repair.”

Understanding the importance of the Travel Advisory in stopping the spread of the virus, the advocacy letters implored our officials to consider “specific guidelines and exemptions” wherein Pennsylvanian workers could continue to report to work in the Southern Tier. “We must do everything possible to protect the health of our residents, but we must also support the health of our local economy. Manufacturing, Construction, Small Business, Healthcare, Education, and more would be dramatically impacted by the inability of Pennsylvanians to report for work in the Southern Tier,” states Kamala Keeley.

ABOUT THE CHEMUNG COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

For more than 115 years, the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce has been the leading voice of business in the region. Through efforts in such diverse areas as local, State, and Federal legislation, small business concerns, tourism promotion and economic development, the Chamber works daily to enhance the economic well-being and quality of life in Chemung County. With nearly 20,000 employees representing more than 500 member firms, the Chamber is the largest full-time, professionally staffed business organization in the region. It is governed by a representative group of members serving as the Board of Directors. The mission of the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce is to represent the business community in the promotion of the prosperity and the quality of life throughout its service area.

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