



New York State Assemblymember
Yuh-Line Niou
Assembly District 65



**ASSEMBLYMEMBER YUH-LINE NIOU
MARCH 2020, COMMUNITY BOARD REPORT**



COVID-19 Press Conference

Last week, Yuh-Line attended a press conference to discuss her plans for COVID-19 in our community and the xenophobia that had stemmed through the spread of the virus. She pointed out that Chinatown businesses were losing business, despite the fact that our businesses undergo the same food and safety inspections, handling standards and health codes,

as anyone else. She called for our community to stand together and remain educated on the growing emergency. Together, we must stop the spread of the unfounded harmful stereotypes and hateful words that people are using to demonize our Asian American community through thoughtful and reasonable discussions.

Moving forward, Yuh-Line called for the following measures to address the COVID-19 outbreak in New York:

- Working Families Relief:
 - Eliminate the one-week wait start for unemployment benefits, the requirements for looking for work, and the restrictive hour range for being eligible for unemployment benefits;
 - All quarantined and laid-off workers must have a full right to return to their jobs once the crisis has passed;
 - Extend the ban on evictions not only through the duration of this crisis, but for a full year afterwards as families recover;
 - Pass paid sick leave for all workers;

- Invest in broad-based worker retraining programs so people can find good jobs after this crisis
- **Small Business Relief:**
 - Halt all commercial evictions for small businesses through the duration of the crisis and for at least six months beyond;
 - Provide additional grants and zero-interest loans to help businesses recover and re-employ people while they wait for revenue to return;
 - Suspend any fines against small businesses that are shuttered during the crisis;
 - New York City should invest in incentive programs to get people back into restaurants after the crisis, eliminating sales tax on non-chain restaurants for one year after the crisis ends;
 - Long-term, pass meaningful eviction protections for small businesses and a vacancy tax for long-vacant storefronts
- **Public Health Relief:**
 - Make available free access to hand sanitizer, soap, rubber gloves, and face masks at the city level — instead of relying on for-profit distribution models;
 - Immediately clean and disinfect NYCHA buildings and other big buildings where families of many generations live together and have common spaces.
 - Expedite home testing kits to protect healthcare workers and other patients from further risk of exposure to the virus
 - Encourage 9/11 health care program that serves our first responders and survivors, many of whom live in lower Manhattan, to quickly process their waitlist of applications and get survivors the coverage they need. Many of whom have respiratory illnesses and other pre-existing conditions which leaves them particularly vulnerable to the worst possible outcomes for this virus.

Letter to Governor Cuomo on At-Home Testing Kits for COVID-19

At the beginning of the breakout of COVID-19 in our community, Yuh-Line wrote a letter to Governor Cuomo to request at-home testing kits which would allow for more rapid testing, would lighten the load on healthcare workers, and would allow our vulnerable community members or individuals experiencing COVID-19 symptoms to stay inside to get tested. While the State is increasing capacity for testing through drive-thru testing, at-home tests would still be the most efficient and safe method. Yuh-Line is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our community and will continue to work with community leaders and government officials to fight against this pandemic.

Letter to NYCHA CEO on Cleaning Protocols in NYCHA

Yuh-Line sent a letter to NYCHA CEO and Chair Gregory Russ urging NYCHA to release their plan for heightened cleaning and disinfecting protocols to protect our NYCHA residents from COVID-19. Residents have reported they had not seen an increase in cleaning and disinfecting in their buildings. Yuh-Line asked NYCHA to follow cleaning protocols set forth by the State that were similarly followed on other high traffic areas including the MTA.

Letter to Governor Cuomo on Priority COVID-19 Testing for 9/11 Responders and Survivors

In protecting our community from the harshest potential effects of COVID-19, Yuh-Line wrote a letter to Governor Cuomo asking him to give priority testing to 9/11 responders and survivors — most of whom suffer from respiratory illnesses and cancer. These diagnoses make people more susceptible to the most dangerous symptoms of COVID-19. Additionally, Yuh-Line asked to lessen the waitlist for 9/11 healthcare programs to ensure that everyone was able to have health coverage in the wake of COVID-19.

Honoring Mabel Lee for Women’s History Month

In celebration of Women’s History Month, Yuh-Line honored Mabel Ping-Hua Lee in Albany. Mabel was an Chinese advocate for the Women’s Suffrage Movement. She lived in Chinatown and was the first woman to receive a PhD from Columbia University. In 1917, women were granted the right to vote in New York State and then in 1920 federally, yet Mabel was still not able to vote because of the Chinese Exclusion Act.



Yuh-Line and other elected officials joined NYC’s first lady Chirlane McCray for a meal in Chinatown to support local small businesses. In the wake of COVID-19, Chinatown’s small businesses are experiencing a significant downturn. Yuh-Line has been supporting these businesses throughout the last few months and will continue her work in Albany to ensure our small businesses can stay in business.

Feel free to contact Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou’s office with any questions or inquiries.

Our office is located at

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