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### 2 Long Island lawmakers on White House task force to reopen economy

Two congressional representatives have been tapped for a White House task force to reopen the economy.

The bipartisan group aims to advise on when and how to restart the economy as the nation continues to navigate the coronavirus pandemic.

From Long Island, Tom Suozzi, a Democrat, and Lee Zeldin, a Republican, were each named to the task force. They each said they were grateful to be a voice for New York. The state has had the highest number of cases and deaths in the country.

Suozzi said in a statement that "it is positive that a bipartisan task force has been created."

Zeldin pointed out in a statement that "before the outbreak of coronavirus, our nation's economy was stronger than it had ever been."

And, he noted, by serving on the committee, he would represent "one of the areas hardest hit by coronavirus."

Health experts warn that relaxing social distancing rules too soon could cause another surge in infections.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, said Tuesday the U.S. does not yet have the critical testing and tracing procedures needed to begin reopening the nation's economy, adding a dose of caution to increasingly optimistic projections from the White House.

Experts recommend a cautious approach.

"We need to get our economy moving again, but we must do it smartly, precisely and carefully to also avoid another outbreak," Zeldin said.

And New York would have particular needs.

"I continue to advocate that New York is the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, we need special attention for our state government, our hospitals, and our local governments," Suozzi said.

Suozzi said that when "it comes to reopening the economy, ubiquitous testing, contact tracing, and heeding the advice of experts will be essential. We must also understand that opening the economy in New York is very different than reopening it in North Dakota."

Speaking about his role on the task force, Zeldin said he would "make New Yorkers' voices and needs heard as we work to emerge for this outbreak stronger than ever."

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

— ADINA GENN

### Nassau Legislature votes to extend property tax deadline

The Nassau County Legislature has unanimously approved an emergency resolution that gives commercial and residential property owners another month to pay their property taxes without interest or penalties.

The resolution, advanced by the Legislature's Republican majority, moves the deadline for paying property taxes, previously slated for May 10, to June 11. The measure now goes to Nassau County Executive Laura Curran to sign or veto.

About 30 minutes before the vote, Curran announced that she had asked Gov. Andrew Cuomo to extend the property tax deadline to June 1 to give "our property owners some breathing space and time."

However, since the governor has yet to act on that request, the County Legislature's Republican majority decided to pursue its own extension to the property tax deadline.

"Officials at every level of government

should be looking for ways to ease crushing financial burdens on residents and businesses as they struggle to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak," Nassau Legislature Presiding Officer Richard Nicoletto said in a written statement. "With thousands of residents out of work and many businesses shuttered or having their operations drastically reduced, this extension will provide additional time to pay their property taxes without being hit with interest and penalties."

Long Island economic development groups have been lobbying to get the property tax deadline extended and/or allow taxpayers to give partial payments.

Kyle Strober, executive director of the Association For a Better Long Island, said his group is "deeply concerned that Long Island's economic future is in danger of being deconstructed by this pandemic" without strong and affirmative measures.

"Essential to that response is the extension of the property tax payment deadline, or permitting partial payments," Strober said via

email. "As executive and legislative branches negotiate the best path forward, it is important to recognize that this action will create a modest but important relief valve for property owners, especially businesses where every added day could mean the difference between survival or failure. We are encouraged by today's announcement and urge all due speed in reaching a consensus."

Nassau's property tax bills are paid twice a year, with the second half coming due in November. At presstime Suffolk County's deadline for annual property taxes was May 31.

— DAVID WINZELBERG

### 36 LI nonprofits share \$450K in COVID-19 fund's first round of giving

Three dozen Long Island nonprofits received a total of \$450,000 in the first round of giving from the rapidly deployed COVID-19 Long Island Philanthropic Response Fund in the Long Island Community Foundation.

"While the Coronavirus has affected all people across the country, its impact on communities of color, families with mixed immigration status, low income workers, seniors and people living in group homes has been profound," David Okorn, executive director of the Melville-based Long Island Community Foundation, said in a statement. "Beyond the health impacts, communities of color are disproportionately affected by the interconnected economic crisis, with a large percentage of these residents losing their jobs. These communities are the least equipped to withstand these economic hardships. As a result, we are making grants to nonprofits on the front lines addressing the needs of vulnerable populations."

LICF launched the fund on March 31 in partnership with the Claire Friedlander Family Foundation, Greentree Foundation, Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund, Rauch Foundation, actor/director Billy Baldwin and other donors.

The fund continues to accept applications on a rolling basis; visit [www.licf.org](http://www.licf.org).

— BERNADETTE STARZEE

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