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LEGISLATORS CALL FOR STATE RUN VACCINE SITE AT SUNY ONEONTA

Senator Oberacker, Assemblymen Angelino, Miller, Salka, Tague make push for much needed clinic to get COVID-19 vaccine to underserved rural residents

ALBANY, 03/04/21 -- State Senator Peter Oberacker (R/C – Schenevus) along with Assemblyman Joe Angelino (R/C/I – Norwich), Assemblyman Brian Miller (R/I – New Hartford), Assemblyman John Salka (R/C/I – Brookfield), and Assemblyman Chris Tague (R/C/I – Schoharie) today called on Governor Cuomo and the New York State Department of Health to establish a state-run COVID vaccination clinic at SUNY Oneonta.

SUNY Oneonta Acting President Dennis Craig said, “ As Chancellor Malatras noted yesterday, since the beginning of the pandemic SUNY has worked hard to meet its many challenges. SUNY Oneonta would welcome the opportunity to serve the people of our region as a vaccination location. We are well-equipped to serve and our staff stands ready to help turn the tide against COVID. The college appreciates the enthusiastic support of our state legislative coalition and our community partners in working together toward this goal.”

Individuals in Otsego, Delaware, Schoharie, and Chenango counties have struggled to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Lack of state-run clinics in the region have forced many to travel more than four hours one way to receive a shot – if they can secure a coveted appointment. All New Yorkers deserve the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and a state-run point of dispensing (POD) site at SUNY Oneonta would benefit residents from throughout the region and greatly help boost vaccination rates.

Senator Peter Oberacker said, “As more and more COVID-19 vaccine doses become available it is critical that we ease the path for rural residents to access a clinic. I visited SUNY Oneonta and

toured the proposed clinic site with Acting President Craig and his staff and was extremely impressed. This site checks all the boxes and would be a gamechanger for many in our region who are eagerly awaiting an opportunity to receive the vaccination. I urge the state to take SUNY Oneonta up on its offer and move forward swiftly.”

Assemblyman Joe Angelino said, “I’ve toured the SUCO facilities, I have seen what the staff is doing currently with COVID testing and know the SUCO campus will be a safe and efficient vaccination site to help accelerate this important mission.”

Assemblyman Brian Miller said, “As I have said before, it is crucial for us to make the COVID-19 vaccine available for those who live in rural communities. By opening SUNY Oneonta as a vaccine site, more of my constituents would have access to this life-saving vaccine without having to drive hours for an appointment, which would be huge for this community. So I urge the state and the governor to consider taking SUNY Oneonta on its offer to become a vaccination site, along with other SUNY sites, in order to help increase the availability of the vaccine to those living in rural communities.”

Assemblyman John Salka said, ““As we see the availability of vaccines increase it is imperative that we make it as accessible as possible and offer distribution sites that allow all who wish to receive the vaccine to be able to get it. SUNY Oneonta is an ideal location to be able to provide this critical service to protect public health, allow open businesses to open back up, and protect all the citizens of our upstate communities.”

Assemblyman Chris Tague said, ““My office receives calls every day about just how difficult it is right now to get the COVID-19 vaccine, and a vaccination site at SUNY Oneonta would be of great help in making more vaccines available to those who need them. It would also help people in the Otsego County-area stay closer to home while getting vaccinated, as many of my constituents have had to travel an hour or more just to get their shot. I am hopeful we can get this site operational and think the state should work with SUNY Oneonta to do everything it can to get this site up and running as soon as possible.”