

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Package of Legislation to Provide \$235 Million in Small Business Relief

06/22/2021

Brings Total to More than \$600 Million in Small Business Relief Since the Start of the Pandemic

TRENTON – As New Jersey continues to recover from the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Phil Murphy today signed six bills – A5704, A5705, A5706, A5707, A5708, and A5709 – which provide additional aid to small businesses that continue to suffer from the economic effects of the pandemic. Together, the bill package provides \$235 million to small businesses throughout the state, allowing the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) to fulfill all eligible applications submitted during Phase IV of the EDA’s Small Business Emergency Grant Program.

“Throughout the past year, we have focused our relief efforts on supporting New Jersey’s small businesses so they can emerge from the pandemic stronger than before,” **said Governor Murphy**. “This additional funding will help us add to the more than 60,000 small businesses that have received aid to date.”

“As we head into the summer, it’s encouraging to see more people out and about, but recovery from the severe economic impact of the pandemic won’t happen overnight,” said NJEDA CEO Tim Sullivan. “It’s clear that businesses are still hurting, and we are grateful for the continued support of Governor Murphy and the legislature, as it will help us to bolster these businesses as they ride out what’s hopefully the end of a very turbulent time.”

In the Assembly the bills were sponsored by Assembly members Vince Mazzeo, Roy Freiman, Lisa Swain, Andrew Zwicker, John Armato, Chris Tully, Pedro Mejia, Angela McKnight, Adam Taliaferro, Nicholas Chiaravalloti, Linda Carter, Joann Downey, Yvonne Lopez, Stanley Sterley, and Eric Houghtaling. In the Senate, the bills were sponsored by Senators Dawn Marie Addiego, Vin Gopal, and Joseph Lagana

“Small businesses are the backbone of New Jersey’s economy and assisting them as we reopen our state is paramount, **the Assembly sponsors said in a joint statement**. “We need to bolster our small business community in every way possible. Giving them the resources they need to survive and thrive is a win-win. As New Jersey returns to normalcy, we must ensure that everyone is well-positioned for our inevitable recovery.”

“Our legislation will provide \$235 million in grants to help businesses and non-profits who were hit hard by the pandemic and are now deciding when and how to reopen, rehire and ramp up to full operation in the weeks and months ahead,” **said Senator Dawn Addiego, the lead Senate sponsor on the bill package**. “The six-bill package sets aside \$30 million specifically for restaurants, and most important, it includes a \$25 million fund for the new restaurants, retailers and service providers that we need to fill the vacant storefronts in our downtown business districts left empty by businesses that closed.”

“The restaurant, hospitality and tourism industries were crippled by the pandemic shutdown last spring and the continuing capacity restrictions that are just now being lifted sufficiently for them to be able to resume somewhat normal operations heading into the summer,” **said Senator Vin Gopal**. “These new grants will be a big help.”

“Small businesses are not only the backbone of our downtowns, but the biggest generators of job growth, and we are going to need that private sector job growth when all of the federal aid and incentives go away in September,” **said Senator Joe Lagana**. “We need to do all we can to keep our existing small businesses afloat and help new businesses emerge.”

The funding will be administered by the NJEDA, which has reopened its Phase IV grant pre-application for those businesses that missed the original deadline. To date, the EDA has distributed more than \$420 million in aid to some 63,000 businesses across the state. The breakdown of the \$235 million in proposed today’s bill package is as follows:



Microbusinesses: \$120 million

Bars and Restaurants: \$20 million

Child Care Facilities: \$10 million

Other Small Businesses and non-profits: \$50 million

New Businesses and Start-Ups: \$25 million

Sustain and Serve: \$10 million

The bill signing was held at the iconic WindMill restaurant in Long Branch, owned by Rena Levine Levy and her brother Steven Levine.

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