

## Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Visits Jersey City's Brownstone Diner & Pancake Factory to See New Jersey's "Open For Business" Attitude In Action

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### ***Diner Owners Kept Workers Employed While Closed Due to Flooding from Hurricane Sandy***

**Trenton, NJ** – Encouraging New Jerseyans to continue their support for storm impacted businesses and towns, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today focused on the resilience and spirit of Jersey City's Brownstone Diner & Pancake Factory, meeting with employees and customers. Hurricane Sandy flooded the Brownstone's basement, forcing it to close for two weeks.

"Businesses like the Brownstone Diner demonstrate why New Jersey is coming back stronger and better than ever after Hurricane Sandy," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "Despite being closed for two weeks without any source of revenue, the Brownstone was committed to its employees and kept most of them on the job working on clean up and preparation for the restaurant's reopening. I've seen this unique New Jersey combination of grit, hard work and compassion throughout our state as we recover and rebuild from Hurricane Sandy."

The Brownstone Diner & Pancake Factory employs 28 people and serves a dinner menu with more than 30 different types of pancakes. The restaurant got its start when Harry Paxos, who along with his three children emigrated from Greece in 1966, purchased the M&A Diner. In the mid 70's, Harry sold the diner to his daughter and son-in-law, Irene and Pete, who renamed it the Newport Pancake House. Now called the Brownstone Diner and Pancake Factory, the restaurant is run by the couple's eldest son, Bobby.

"We have a lot of employees, and many of them could not survive a two week period without some type of income," said Bobby Bournias, the Brownstone's owner. "Our servers and employees helped with demolition and cosmetic work to ensure that our restaurant could reopen as quickly as possible for our customers, as well as our employees and their families."

Water destroyed electrical equipment, computers, a walk-in refrigerator, compressors and food. The Brownstone was able to keep its employees working by enlisting many of them to help clean-up and dispose spoiled food.

"We had a record holiday season, which is great," said Bournias. "A lot of people were happy we were open again. It seems things are sort of back to normal again. I felt that as soon as we opened our doors people were very excited. It's a local, popular place in downtown Jersey City so a lot of people were excited we were open. It was kind of nice that a lot of the customers just seemed really happy that we were okay and back in business. That is really nice. It's nice to see that."

Businesses are encouraged to call the state's Business Action Center at 1-866-534-7789 for assistance and information on the many business advocacy services available through the state. Information is also available by visiting the state's business portal at [www.newjerseybusiness.gov](http://www.newjerseybusiness.gov).

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