



NEW JERSEY SENATE

SENATE CHAMBERS  
P.O. Box 099  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0099

May 29, 2020

The Honorable Steve Sweeney  
Senate Democratic Office  
P.O. Box 099  
Trenton, NJ, 08625

Dear Senate President Sweeney,


Two weeks ago, our Senate Republican caucus wrote to you calling for the formation of a Senate Select Committee to investigate the Murphy administration's response to COVID-19, including the orders that contributed to the loss of life in New Jersey's long-term care facilities.

We are thankful that you listened to our requests and announced jointly with Senate Republican Leader Tom Kean the formation of a bipartisan Senate Review and Recovery Committee for this purpose. This is a positive step that will allow New Jersey to learn from its mistakes and improve our State's response as we look to reopen safely.

While much of the focus in recent weeks has been on the administration's serious lapses regarding nursing homes, veterans homes, and other long-term care facilities, new reports have highlighted similar concerns with the response by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. As the new Senate committee embarks upon its critically important review, we believe it is imperative that the needs of all of our vulnerable communities be examined, including residents with disabilities who live in group homes, apartments, and other facilities regulated by the State.

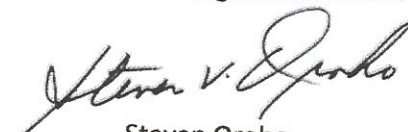
Finally, we would like to reiterate our belief that this new committee must have subpoena power to compel witnesses to appear. Without this authority, it appears likely that the administration will prevent the testimony of key officials who have direct knowledge of the matters under review. We must ensure that lawmakers have the ability to obtain the answers we need to develop the protections every New Jerseyan expects and deserves.

Sincerely,

  
Joe Pennacchio  
Senator – 26<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

  
Declan O'Scanlon  
Senator – 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

  
Kristin Corrado  
Senator – 40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

  
Steven Oroho  
Senator – 24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District