Senator Kirsten Gillibrand Tours Trudeau Institute and Discusses Workforce Legislation

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New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand was in Saranac Lake this morning to tour the Trudeau Institute and to promote legislation to get people back into the workforce.

The Trudeau Institute gained fame for its tuberculosis research and is now renowned for studying and seeking treatments and vaccines for infectious diseases of the lungs and immune system such as cancer, tuberculosis, influenza and Lyme disease.

Trudeau Institute President Dr. Atsuo Kuki said the facility established a new laboratory to study COVID-19. “Our internal efforts we’re working very hard on novel therapeutics which can block the virus itself. And that’s going to take time but it is something that we’re turning on very very quickly and we’ve already got promising results in a very short period of time and we need to scale that up and really test our ideas. On the other hand vaccines, which everyone wants to know about, requires huge team science. So there the Trudeau does not do it alone. There the Trudeau is part of team science with other large groups. Just a staggering number of
research labs are working on this. This is the most aligned scientific effort I’ve ever seen. The scientific sharing is tremendous. The effort level is unbelievable and we’re rather well plugged in with the effort across the country and globally.”

Senator Gillibrand, a Democrat, met with institute officials and took a private tour of the facility. “I saw how they clean the PPE, the masks particularly. And I saw how the facility is able to do the kind of research it does for highly infectious diseases. So I really got to see how they’re doing the great work they’re doing now. And what I like so much about Trudeau is that it’s really at the forefront of the most important research.”

Gillibrand said she was impressed with the Institute’s work in two critical areas of COVID-19 research and recovery. “First making PPE more readily available which is an essential service right now that they are doing. That’s not their norm they’re doing it just to meet the need. And second that they’re doing fundamental research on COVID. And so if we want to have vaccinations, cures and other treatments the work they do here is essential. And I think the kind of work they’re doing is like a national research lab just on a much smaller scale. And to have that right here in upstate New York I think is an enormous asset to the region.”

The Senator also outlined two pieces of legislation aimed at rebuilding the economy and helping the workforce. “We need to rework the system so that companies are rewarded for bringing jobs back to the United States. My bill, End Outsourcing Act, would do exactly that. It would ensure that federal contracts, grants and loans go to companies that employ American workers. As we focus on rebuilding the American economy we can’t lose sight of the American worker. It’s critical that as a country we invest in worker training. The Relaunching America’s Workforce Act calls for $15 billion of funding for workforce training infrastructure.”

Senator Gillibrand plans to include her End Outsourcing Act and the Relaunching America’s Workforce Act in the next coronavirus relief bill.