



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

Serino Announces Major WINS for New York Seniors

SUE SERINO March 30, 2015

| ISSUE: **AGING, EPIC (ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE PROGRAM), SENIORS**
| COMMITTEE: **AGING**



For Immediate Release

March 30, 2015

Contact: Kara Cumoletti

cumolett@nysenate.gov

518-455-2945

SERINO ANNOUNCES MAJOR WINS FOR NEW YORK SENIORS

Statement on the Passage of the Health Budget

ALBANY, NY— Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park), Chair of the Senate Committee on Aging, announced today that new State Budget for 2015-16 includes major wins for New York Seniors.

“Since taking office, I have heard from countless seniors who feel disenfranchised,” said Senator Serino. “As the Chair of the Aging Committee, I made it my priority during these budget negotiations to not only listen to their needs, but to really hear them. I am confident that this new State budget delivers for our seniors by investing in programs that will empower them to live out their lives right here in New York.”

This year’s budget will:

- include full funding of over **\$120 million** for the State’s **EPIC program** which enables our seniors to pay for the prescriptions they need;
- provides a historic **\$26 million dollar investment** in **Elder Health**, including an unprecedented commitment to initiatives to combat **Alzheimer’s Disease**;
- add **\$2.5 million** to the **Community Services for the Elderly Program** bringing the total investment in the program to **\$27.8 million**;
- deny the Executive proposal to eliminate the Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living (EQUAL) program and restores **\$6.5 million** to enhance the quality of care and life experience at adult living facilities;
- add **\$500,000** to the **Ombudsman Program**, which provides an effective advocate and resource for those in assisted living and nursing homes;
- place Managed Long Term Care Transportation services under statewide transportation management and restore **\$7.4 million** to protect transportation services for the elderly;
- include **\$945,000 Lifespan for Elderly Abuse, Education and Outreach**;
- include **\$172,000 New York Foundation for Seniors Home Sharing and Respite**; and

- include **\$63,000 for Senior Action Council Hotline**

Coupled with the real property tax relief provided to families and seniors in the budget—**\$3.2 billion** to help fully fund **STAR** and **Enhanced STAR** and the **\$1.4 billion** in **school aid**— the money appropriated to programs benefitting seniors will go a long way in improving quality of life for New York’s seniors.

Senator Serino continued, “As a newly elected State Senator, I am incredibly proud of what we have been able to accomplish and I thank my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, for supporting these critical initiatives.”

The Senator concluded by saying, “Today, we are sending a strong message to our seniors that we know they are an asset to our communities and that we place great value on their staying right here in NY. Today, our seniors have been heard.”

###