



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Yonkers Times: State Senator Shelley Mayer Recognized by Pediatric Cancer Foundations

SHELLEY B. MAYER November 19, 2024

In honor of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, State Senator Shelley B. Mayer was honored by the Pediatric Cancer Foundation, the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation, and the Making Headway Foundation for her legislation to require insurance companies to cover the cost of neuropsychological evaluations for children with cancer.

Senator Mayer received an Award of Excellence, for her bill S.8750/A10063(Burdick), which would require health insurers to cover comprehensive neuropsychological exams for children diagnosed with pediatric cancers or brain tumors.

Every year, nearly 16,000 children are diagnosed with pediatric cancer and 5,000 children are diagnosed with pediatric brain tumors. Treatment includes surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy and pediatric brain tumors and cancers can lead to significant long-term impairment. Thankfully, many who are diagnosed will survive into adulthood, however, it is critical that they receive comprehensive evaluations to identify the appropriate interventions and services.

However, not all insurance companies cover the long, in depth exams, making them unaffordable and unavailable to most families. This bill will provide insurance coverage for individuals under 26 who need neuropsychological examinations in accordance with their

diagnosis. This will allow the individuals to get the services they need.

This bill passed the Senate during the 2024 legislative session; it has not passed the Assembly.

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “I am deeply honored to be recognized by Pediatric Cancer Foundation, Making Headway Foundation, and Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation for my bill, S.8750, to reduce the costs of essential evaluations for children. Childhood illnesses are devastating and parents should be focused on ensuring their child receives the care they need and deserve, not the cost of it. It is our job in the state legislature to help families dealing with the toughest challenges, and I will continue to fight for these families. Thank you to the Pediatric Cancer Foundation, Making Headway Foundation, and Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation for this honor. But more importantly, thank you for your work as advocates for the children and families working through these challenges.”

Pamela Strauss Peligri, Executive Director of the Pediatric Cancer Foundation, said, “I learned about a piece of legislation that Senator Mayer had been advocating for on behalf of children with cancer, and hearing about this remarkable Senator, mother and grandmother, and all that she has done on behalf of these children and their families, I realized, IT’S TIME! It’s time we let the world know we actually have a leader like this, and possibly inspire other leaders to do the same; not only for children in NY, but potentially, for children all over the world. The Pediatric Cancer Foundation has been instrumental in getting that cure rate to above 80% but we’re still inching towards that 100%; we’re not going to stop and we’re not going away until it’s done!”

Dan Lipka, Executive Director of Making Headway Foundation, said, “Brain tumors are the most common and most devastating tumors found in children. Throughout her career, Senator Shelley Mayer has routinely demonstrated her commitment to helping these children and their families. Whether it is raising awareness or championing critical

legislation, Senator Mayer has gone above and beyond to help children in need. For kids with brain tumors, they face a lifetime of challenges, especially in achieving their potential at school. This year, Senator Mayer is helping to eliminate one of those challenges by sponsoring legislation to have health insurance companies cover the costs for children with cancer or brain tumors to get needed neuro-psychological evaluations. The childhood cancer community is proud to have a champion in Senator Shelley Mayer.”

Michael Henry, Director of Advocacy of the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation, said, “We are grateful for Sen. Mayer’s willingness to listen to our pediatric cancer community. She understands the incredible financial strain on our families and is working to support them through her legislative efforts. We appreciate having such a strong ally in New York.”

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