



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

Senator Duane Appoints Soffel, Bearden To Key NYS Senate Health Committee Posts

THOMAS K. DUANE March 2, 2009

| COMMITTEE: [HEALTH](#)

New York State Senator Thomas K. Duane (D, WFP-Manhattan), chair of the Senate Health Committee, today announced his appointment of Denise Soffel as Health Committee Executive Director and Roger Bearden as Health Committee Counsel effective March 9, 2009.

Soffel comes to her new position from the National Center for Law and Economic Justice (NCLEJ), where she worked as the Health Policy Coordinator, developing and implementing policy advocacy strategy to improve and strengthen public health insurance programs. At the same time she served as the leader of Medicaid Matters, a state-wide Medicaid consumer coalition. Prior to joining NCLEJ, Soffel spent twelve years as a Senior Health Policy Analyst for the Community Service Society of New York. Her diverse and extensive health and government policy experience dates to the mid-1980s, when she was a health planner and analyst for the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation. Extensively published, Soffel holds both a Ph.D. and an M.P.A. from the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University.

Bearden is joining the Senate Health Committee from Disability Advocates, Inc., where he litigated and advocated on behalf of individuals with mental illness and other disabilities. Significant cases he has been involved with include Disability Advocates, Inc. v. Pataki and Joseph S. v. Hogan, cases seeking the integration of individuals with mental illness in community-based settings. Previously, Bearden served for four years as an associate at Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman, where he litigated in federal and state courts and specialized in First Amendment law, representation of religious minorities, and international litigation. Bearden holds a J.D from Harvard Law School and an A.B. in International Relations from Brown University, and is a former clerk for Judge Walter J. Cummings of the Seventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

"It is my great pleasure to announce these appointments," said Senator Duane. "Denise and Roger share my commitment to sound, progressive public health policy and have a wealth of skills and experience to draw upon. They will be great assets to the Senate Health Committee and the State of New York."