



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Frank Padavan

Senate Passes Major Autism Health Insurance Coverage Bill

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New York State Senator Frank Padavan (Queens) announced today that the State Senate has passed legislation (S.7000B) he co-sponsored that would expand health insurance policies in New York to cover screening, diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder.

“Early diagnosis and treatment is vital to provide the best course of action and quality of life for a child facing autism,” Padavan said. “This bill makes sense on a number of levels. It will lead to better outcomes for the families facing autism. No longer will families bear an untenable financial burden that is associated with treating autism. I am proud to vote and support this compassionate legislative measure that will provide much-needed help for autistic children and their families.”

According to the most recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) it is estimated that an average of 1 in 110 children in the United States has an autism spectrum disorder. 1 in 7 boys are diagnosis with autism. Before the most recent CDC report was released in 2009, a 2007 CDC study estimated that 1 in 150 children had autism.

Approximately 1.5 million individuals in the United States have autism. According to Autism Speaks, the autism prevalence rate has been on the rise by approximately 200 percent over the past two decades. In four years alone, from 2002 to 2006, autism diagnosis increased by 57 percent.

“With each passing year, more and more children are being diagnosis with autism spectrum disorders,” Padavan said. “The CDC facts and statistics point to an urgent need for action to provide the tools to families when dealing with autism and provide health insurance coverage that is vital to stop the growth and prevalence of autism spectrum disorders. Today we took the right step that will make great strides toward progress and relief for thousands of New York families.”

The bipartisan legislation is supported by Autism Insurance Reform, Autism Speaks, the Medical Society of New York State and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The legislation passed with unanimous bipartisan support and now awaits action in the State Assembly.