



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

Senator Carlucci at Mental Hygiene Joint Budget Conference Hearing

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Senator Carlucci Protects New Yorkers

with Developmental Disabilities

(Albany, NY) Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Orange) was appointed to the Mental Hygiene Joint Budget Conference Committee and participated in the first hearing today in Albany. The purpose of this hearing is to bring the Senate and the Assembly together to discuss areas of similarities and differences in each house's budget resolutions in an effort to come to a budget agreement.

In this 2011-2012 budget, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) programs are looking at a 4-5% cut. This cut increases when you include the federal share and the cuts at the Medicaid Redesign table. These cuts will mean that programs will have to lay off workers, reduce services or even close, resulting in a huge loss in services for people with development disabilities.

Senator Carlucci has attempted to mitigate these devastating cuts by working with the Senate to make restorations to these vital programs, however, the Assembly has chosen not to make any restorations to the OPWDD budget.

"We must protect our state's most vulnerable citizens," Senator Carlucci said. "If we cut funding for OPWDD, how can we undertake the immediate and comprehensive review of the agencies and their practices, that Governor Cuomo has called for? We cannot allow our fellow New Yorkers to fall through the cracks in our system or suffer one more instance of abuse."

"I am concerned that there will not be sufficient training and support for staff to ensure the safety and welfare of people with developmental disabilities," Senator Carlucci said. "It appears that the OPWDD budget is one of the only agencies not to receive any restorations from the Assembly. My question to the Assembly is, why has the Assembly chosen not to restore any funding to an agency that serves some of New York's most vulnerable citizens? I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure vital services are maintained for New Yorkers with developmental

disabilities.”