



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Valesky Legislation to Prevent Elderly Abuse Signed Into Law

DAVID J. VALESKY August 16, 2011

| ISSUE: **AGING, SENIOR CENTERS, SENIORS**

| COMMITTEE: **AGING**

Legislation sponsored by Senator David Valesky (D-Oneida) that promotes the development of senior citizen-based domestic abuse prevention programs was recently signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

S4235 directs the Office For the Prevention of Domestic Violence to develop senior center-based domestic violence prevention programs. This new law aims to create new resources for victims of elder abuse. These new programs would be utilized and offered at senior centers throughout the state.

“Senior centers serve as a gathering place for many seniors in their community, making them an ideal environment to offer domestic violence prevention programs. Developing prevention programs designed specifically for seniors will be especially helpful as seniors often are more reluctant to seek out help when it comes to such sensitive issues,” Senator Valesky said.

“Elder abuse is a tragic social problem that affects a significant number of older New Yorkers, and we know that in the vast majority of the cases it happens at the hands of those we know – both family and friends. All too often, elder abuse goes unnoticed or unreported. It is critical that seniors and the professionals that serve them be made aware of the warning signs of elder abuse and learn what resources are available to support them,” said Jenny Hicks, Vera House’s Coordinator of the Elder Abuse Committee of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition.

Senator Valesky’s legislation helps to promote the proper care of the elderly in senior centers, and makes staff and other community members aware of the growing concern of elder abuse in the senior citizen community.

“I am grateful to Governor Cuomo for recognizing the serious issue of elder abuse and signing this legislation into law,” Senator Valesky said.