



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Senator Hoylman Commends DFS Superintendent Lawsky for Taking Decisive Action in Fight Against Meningitis Outbreak

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL April 24, 2013

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**

New York, NY (April 24, 2013) — Today, New York State Superintendent of Financial Services Benjamin M. Lawsky sent letters to health insurers directing them to inform the public that meningitis vaccines effective against a new, lethal strain of that disease are covered under insurance.

New York State Senator Brad Hoylman (D, WFP – Manhattan), who had reached out to the Superintendent to request this action, said: “I commend Benjamin Lawsky, the Superintendent of Financial Services, for directing health insurers to inform health care providers and the public that vaccination for meningitis is covered by their insurance plans. I greatly appreciate the Cuomo Administration’s decisive action on this issue.

“The outbreak of bacterial meningitis poses a serious threat to men who have sex with men, in particular those who are HIV positive. According to the NYC Department of Health, approximately 30 percent of people who develop this strain of the disease die of it, and it has already resulted in seven deaths and more than twenty cases in the New York City area. I have heard from constituents, many of them gay men, who have been informed by their health care providers that the vaccination is not covered by insurance. The Superintendent’s

letter will clarify the situation and raise much-needed public awareness about this deadly disease and the importance and availability of the life-saving vaccination.”