



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: Reports signal agreement on funding restoration for people with disabilities

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 13, 2013

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Albany, N.Y., June 13—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) released a statement on today's news reports that the Legislature and Governor Andrew Cuomo are working toward an agreement before the end of the legislative session next week to restore a \$90-million cut in funding to the state Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) that was included in this year's state budget.

“This cut was the biggest downside and disappointment of this year’s state budget,” said O’Mara, who since the adoption of the budget in late March has joined an overwhelming number of his colleagues in the Senate and Assembly to continue urging Cuomo to restore the cut. “Hopefully we’ll be acting as soon as possible to remove this threat to the programs and services that are the lifelines for people with disabilities and their families.”

Details are expected to emerge over the coming days, but O’Mara called it an “extremely positive development.”

[According to reports](#) on the still-developing plan, if a previously established working group is unable to achieve recommended savings without impacting essential programs and services, state funds will be utilized to make up the difference. Read more [here](#), and [here](#).

During budget negotiations earlier this year, O’Mara said that both [the Senate and Assembly had called for rejecting](#) and fully restoring the governor’s proposed \$120 million or six-percent, across-the-board reduction to OPWDD – the lead state agency overseeing state assistance to programs and services for people with developmental disabilities.

The governor, however, would only agree to a \$30-million restoration, or just one-quarter of his original cut – leaving the current \$90-million gap.