



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Statement From Senator Ritchie on Full Restoration of Opwdd Funding

PATTY RITCHIE June 18, 2013

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Earlier this year, the Governor proposed \$120 million in cuts to the OPWDD budget. Although the Senate and Assembly supported a full restoration of this cut, the Governor would not agree. We were however successful in restoring \$30 million of the \$120 million in proposed cuts.

After the budget announcement, I made it a priority to visit with the families of developmentally disabled individuals, and the agencies providing these vital services. In doing so, I was able to get their insights on how these cuts would impact the vital care individuals with physical and developmental disabilities receive. Although Albany assured us there would be no impact on local agencies, I still favored full restoration of the funds.

Since the budget announcement, I have been committed to finding a resolution to this issue, and today, I am immensely pleased that through bipartisan legislation which I cosponsored (Senate Bill 4777-D), the \$90 million in cuts to the OPWDD enacted in the state budget will be reversed.

The services provided by the OPWDD help to ensure that some of our state's most vulnerable citizens receive the critical, life-sustaining services they need. Because of this restoration, people with physical and developmental disabilities can now be assured they will have access to the resources they need to maintain their health, safety and overall quality of life.