



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Senate Gives Final Passage To Bill Protecting Developmentally Disabled From Funding Cuts

JAMES L. SEWARD June 18, 2013

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ALBANY, 06/18/13 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today announced final legislative passage of a bill that would protect providers for services for developmentally disabled from state funding cuts.

The legislation ([S.4777D](#)) co-sponsored by Senator Seward, would appropriate up to \$90 million to the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to protect providers from funding reductions if recommended savings measures fall short of projections.

“During the state budget process I fought hard to restore the governor’s cuts to the OPWDD budget. As a long-time supporter of these programs I realize how vital they are to the lives of vulnerable New Yorkers,” said Senator Seward. **“While partial restorations were made, I was not pleased with the final funding numbers, and vowed to continue the fight – which has now been won.”**

Senator Seward and his Republican colleagues in the senate strongly opposed the proposal in the governor’s budget for \$240 million in across-the-board funding cuts to OPWDD. The senate’s budget resolution, passed in March, called for the full restoration of funding for OPWDD.

The final state budget restored \$60 million in state and federal funds to OPWDD. In addition, the budget created a workgroup that identified alternatives to minimize the impact of the cuts. The plan included using funds from Medicaid fraud recoveries, implementing less costly approaches to treatment, and ensuring that Medicaid is the payer of last resort.

Under the legislation passed today, should the savings fall short of the amount expected to be achieved from the workgroup, the state would transfer sufficient funds to OPWDD to make up for the shortfall. The commissioner of OPWDD may also take into account greater efficiencies which do not diminish or impair services or the quality of care as reflected in the recommendations of the workgroup.

“This new agreement will ensure that developmentally disabled New Yorkers and their families will continue to receive the quality care and support they depend on to make it through the day, while progressing toward long-term goals,” Seward concluded.