



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Supports Legislation To Protect Individuals With Developmental Disabilities

JOHN J. FLANAGAN June 18, 2013

| ISSUE: **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) today voted to pass legislation ([S4777D](#)), which he sponsored in the Senate, that would protect providers of services for the developmentally disabled from state funding cuts. The legislation 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.

“This was a matter of great importance to many of the residents of our state and it was vital to their lives that we restore this much-needed funding. Having worked closely with many of these organizations through the years, I am keenly aware of the challenges facing OPWDD providers and the important work they provide to families and children across New York State,” stated Senator Flanagan. “The actions that we have taken today will ensure that New York’s most vulnerable residents will continue to receive the assistance they need and deserve.”

Senator Flanagan and his Senate Republican colleagues strongly opposed the proposal in Governor Andrew Cuomo’s original budget proposal calling for \$240 million in across-the-board funding cuts to OPWDD that were made due to actions taken at the Federal level. Recognizing the negative and unacceptable consequences of such a drastic cut, the Senate passed a budget resolution in March which called for full restoration of funding for OPWDD.

Through negotiations between the Legislature and the Governor, the final adopted budget restored \$30 million in State funds and enabled New York to receive another \$30 million in a Federal match. But this agreement resulted in a shortfall of \$180 million for these vital organizations.

To lessen the impact of that loss, the budget agreement also called for the creation of a workgroup to identify alternatives to 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 from those actions fall short of the amount expected to be achieved from the workgroup, New York 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.

The bill, which was passed in the Assembly under the leadership of Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg (20th Assembly District), will be sent to the Governor for his consideration.