



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## O'Mara co-sponsoring legislation to delay implementation of OMH plan jeopardizing future of Elmira Psychiatric Center

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 19, 2013

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**Elmira, N.Y., November 19**— State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C-Big Flats) **welcomed yesterday's comments** from a key colleague, Senate Deputy Majority Leader Tom Libous (R-Binghamton), that Governor Andrew Cuomo will consider alternatives to a comprehensive state Office of Mental Health (OMH) reorganization plan that calls for shutting down inpatient services and other changes at the Elmira Psychiatric Center.

The Cuomo administration announced the OMH plan in early July. **Since then O'Mara has been working with local and state leaders** across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, including Libous, to urge the plan's reconsideration.

O'Mara also said that he's signed on as a co-sponsor of legislation Libous is introducing, the ["Freeze Unsafe Closures Now Act,"](#) to delay the implementation of any OMH reorganization plan until at least April 1, 2015.

"I look forward to continue working closely with Senator Libous and all of our local leaders and stakeholders to make the case to the Cuomo administration that our mental facilities in Elmira and Binghamton deserve a stronger role, a much stronger role, in the OMH reorganization strategy," said O'Mara. "It's welcome news that Governor Cuomo is at least willing to listen. I look forward to ongoing opportunities to keep making the case for saving the Elmira Psychiatric Center."

Libous made his comments at a news conference in Binghamton yesterday. A meeting between state lawmakers, stakeholders and the Cuomo administration could take place as early as next week.

In late October, O'Mara held a public hearing in Elmira on the future of the Elmira PC [[read and watch more](#)].

O'Mara also urged area residents to attend a public rally in support of the Elmira Psychiatric Center this Saturday, November 23rd, at the Clemens Center in Elmira. The rally, which begins at 10:00 a.m., will be followed by a "community walk" on the grounds of the Elmira PC. [Read more...](#)