



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Valesky bill to cover equipment and supplies for ostomies signed into law

DAVID J. VALESKY September 25, 2014

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, INSURANCE, SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH CARE, HOSPITALS**

SYRACUSE—This week, Governor Cuomo signed into law [S.7893](#), sponsored by Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) which requires insurers to include coverage of equipment and supplies necessary for the treatment of ostomies.

An ostomy is a surgically created opening connecting an internal organ to the abdomen, caused by many different conditions, including cancer, bowel disease, birth defects and injury. Different kinds of ostomies are named for the organ involved, such as a colostomy, ileostomy, or urostomy.

Ostomies can be a lifelong health condition, and require necessary and costly equipment and supplies, including pouches, seals, belts, tubes and wafers. Previously, the law did not require coverage of ostomy supplies, as it does with other conditions like diabetes, causing those living with ostomies a great cost burden.

The new law sponsored by Senator Valesky changes that. In addition to greatly improving the quality of life for those dealing with an ostomy, coverage of equipment can ultimately result in savings to the healthcare system caused by repeat and extended hospital visits due to lack of or insufficient equipment.

“This law makes sense, and makes the coverage of necessary ostomy supplies consistent with coverage for other conditions like diabetes,” Senator Valesky said. “I thank Governor Cuomo for recognizing the importance of this issue.”

“Not having proper ostomy supplies can be devastating to patients, and this bill will make a huge difference in the lives of ostomy patients throughout New York State. We are very grateful to Senator Valesky for helping us with this issue,” Heidi H. Cross, ostomy nurse practitioner at Upstate University Hospital and a member of the United Ostomy Associations of America, said.

The legislation will take effect January 1, 2015.

##