



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator Valesky plan sets aside \$10m for supportive housing Upstate in IDC “Invest NY” agenda

DAVID J. VALESKY February 19, 2015

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SYRACUSE—State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) and the Independent Democratic Conference have unveiled a comprehensive policy agenda that would include \$10 million allocated specifically to Upstate New York for supportive housing development.

Supportive housing models include inclusive design for those who may have physical impairments and often offer a variety of services including activities, transportation, an on-site service coordinator, amenities, meals, and support for residents' health-related services.

“Housing, especially for our vulnerable populations, is a critical issue, and the IDC proposal ensures that funding will be available statewide,” Senator Valesky said. “Supportive housing is an excellent option for seniors and others in need to live on their own while receiving critical services and assistance.”

As more and more New Yorkers age into retirement, independent living with access to support services is not only an attractive option to seniors, but it also offers an opportunity to reduce the high cost of Medicaid. There is a large population of older New Yorkers who are unable to live entirely independently, and as a result, have to be placed in a nursing home. There is no middle ground that exists, which would give seniors an extra level of care, yet

keep them out of an institutionalized setting. The result is that nursing home beds are currently being occupied by elderly citizens who do not necessarily need that type of assistance.

Governor Cuomo's Medicaid Redesign Team Multi-Year Action plan made clear that there is a need for availability for affordable and supportive housing in upstate New York. Correspondingly, last year's 2014-15 Enacted Budget included \$95 million for this purpose.

However, thus far, none of the funds available have been granted to counties outside of New York City. Senator Valesky's proposal would ensure that no less than \$10 million be directed from the supportive housing development fund to counties outside New York City.

Jolie Milstein, President and CEO of NYS Association for Affordable Housing said, "Supportive housing is a proven cost-effective tool for enhancing stability and quality of life for New York's most vulnerable populations. Given the tremendous need for this type of housing, NYSAFAH supports an equitable allocation of MRT funds throughout the state to ensure that no community is left behind."

Other components of the IDC's housing plan directed toward ensuring vulnerable populations have a safe and comfortable place to call home include: a \$40 million fund dedicated to providing a direct subsidy for developers to incentivize housing for middle and low income seniors; a REPAIR 2015 tax credit of up to \$7,500 for repairs to seniors' homes where the resident cannot afford the cost of the project; and the creation of a \$25 million housing disability fund that would be used to leverage up to \$180 million in private financing to be used to develop or retrofit up to 1,400 housing units for people with mental or developmental disabilities.

In addition, the plan invests additional funding for the Mitchell-Lama program, which funds affordable housing for middle-income residents, and for public housing revitalization in New

York City.