



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Serving on Governor Cuomo's Medicaid Redesign Task Force

THOMAS K. DUANE January 13, 2011

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On January 5, 2011, Governor Cuomo issued an executive order creating the Medicaid Redesign Team. New York's Medicaid program provides health insurance coverage to almost one in four New Yorkers, and costs over \$52 billion per year. The Medicaid Redesign Team is charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the State's Medicaid program; making recommendations to the Governor by March 1, 2011 on potential Medicaid spending reductions in the State's Fiscal Year 2011-12 budget; and issuing a final report at the end of Fiscal Year 2011-2012 on additional short-term reforms and systemic changes to improve quality of care at lower cost.

While this will be incredibly difficult work, I was pleased to be named one of the team's 27 members, along with New York State Assembly Member Dick Gottfried and two Republican legislators, relevant experts from various state agencies, health care and insurance industry stakeholders, as well as one representative of Medicaid consumers. I would have hoped for more consumer representation; as always, I will speak out to ensure that the concerns New York's least powerful constituencies – which certainly include Medicaid consumers – are addressed.

Key areas on which I plan to focus include:

- Continuing the reform of Medicaid payment mechanisms to better reimburse primary

and preventive care services, thus encouraging better management of health problems and reducing the chance they will develop into catastrophic illnesses.

- Reducing health disparities among New York State's poor and minority populations by improving quality and performance of health care providers.
- Expanding and strengthening "Medical Homes" to improve coordination among health professionals involved in a patient's care to achieve better health outcomes.
- Maximizing federal funding provided by the new healthcare law (the Affordable Care Act of 2010) to support innovative ways to care for persons suffering with multiple illnesses, including those with behavioral health problems in addition to chronic physical health problems.

If you would like more information about the Governor's Medicaid Redesign Team or would like to share your suggestions, please visit <http://governor.ny.gov/medicaidredesign>. Of course you may also contact my office directly at (212) 633-8052.