



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

# Speaking up for People with Developmental Disabilities

Brad Hoylman

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On March 15, 2013, I addressed the Manhattan Developmental Disabilities Council's annual legislative breakfast (MDDC). Of particular concern to the organization is Governor Cuomo's proposed 6% (\$120 million) cut to the Office for People with

Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) in the Fiscal Year 2013-14 New York State Budget. This would result in a massive \$240 million reduction in funding for community-based supports and services to people with developmental disabilities because New York would lose \$120 million in federal matching funds as well.

OPWDD services are not luxuries; they are essential services that people with special needs rely upon every day and which dramatically improve their quality of life. The cut to OPWDD's community based service would have a devastating impact on the quality of care for these vulnerable New Yorkers. It would force agencies to lay off direct support staff and/or close vital programs, which would increase health and safety risks for people with developmental disabilities and potentially reduce many of them to a custodial level of care.

I have heard from and met with many parents, families, and individuals with developmental disabilities who would be impacted by these cuts. I have been speaking up on their behalf and, alongside many colleagues in both houses of the legislature, am fighting to get these funds restored in the enacted budget.