



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

Senator Avella and Seniors Call on Governor to Not Cut Title XX Funding From Senior Centers

TONY AVELLA February 23, 2017

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Queens, NY – This morning, Senator Tony Avella joined local senior citizens at the Services Now for Adult Persons (SNAP) Center of Eastern Queens to call on the Governor to change his plan to redirect Title XX funds away from senior centers. The interactive forum provided the seniors the opportunity to speak directly to a state legislator in their fight to keep their Title XX funding.

Earlier this month SNAP seniors participated in a letter writing campaign to tell the Governor how important the center is to them and what it would mean if funding was taken away.

Of the Federal Title XX funding that New York State receives, \$27 million is for discretionary spending that can be used for anything ranging from day care services for children to residential placement for adults. Currently, New York City uses their funds to support senior centers. If the Governor's proposal is adopted, this \$27 million will now have to be used for child care subsidies.

Up to 6,000 senior centers across the state could be affected by the funding diversion, and some may have to close as a result.

Senator Avella was joined by dozens of seniors who expressed their concerns about the possibility of losing their senior centers. “I come to the senior center and enjoy a hot nutritious lunch. I also participate in arts and crafts and have the opportunity to socialize with others which helps lessen isolation for me. If the Governor’s proposal to cut Title XX funding from senior centers goes through, my quality of life will be greatly altered,” **said Carole Vahey**, a senior who has attended SNAP for the past 13 years.

“I attend health and wellness classes, join group discussions, share lunch with friends, and have the opportunity to get out of the house and spend time socializing with others. The senior center is vital to me,” **said Fred Feinstein**, a member of SNAP for 7 years.

“SNAP is the sponsor of two senior centers and, if implemented, the Governor's plan to redirect Title XX funding away from senior services will have devastating effects on both sites. Our Neighborhood Center could possibly face closure, leaving hundreds of seniors without food, support and services,” **added Paola Miceli**, CEO/President of SNAP.

“Today, people are living longer than ever and need some assistance in maintaining a good quality of life in a state they helped build. If these funds are redirected, albeit to a good cause, there is no guarantee that the city would step in and help provide the funding that these senior centers require to serve the senior community. More needs to be done to ensure that as our community ages we will still support them the way they supported the generations before them. I will gladly take the 250 plus letters you wrote straight to the Governor when I return to Albany next week,” **Senator Avella said** during the question and answer portion of the interactive forum.