



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Governor Signs Senator Montgomery's Bill To Create School Based Health Center Fund

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY October 9, 2018

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS, HEALTH EQUITY, CHILDREN'S HEALTH, PRIMARY CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

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GOVERNOR SIGNS SENATOR MONTGOMERY'S BILL TO CREATE SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER FUND

Last week, Senator Montgomery's bill to create a personal income tax check-off box for donations to a newly formed School-Based Health Centers Fund (S4487-B/A2660-B Ortiz) was signed by the Governor. It is anticipated that this legislation will create at least \$2 million in new revenue for School Based Health Centers across New York State.

Senator Montgomery's bill creates an additional stream of funding for School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) by allowing individuals to donate to the fund through a personal income tax check-off box. Revenue generated would be deposited in the "School-Based Health Centers Fund" in the custody of the Comptroller to be used by the Department of Health to support expansion of medical services at existing school based health sites or to establish

new sites.

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“Every year we have to fight for School Based Health Centers in the budget. I am so glad the Governor signed my bill to create a new funding opportunity for our centers. Our SBHCs take an enormous burden off parents who cannot miss work or afford insurance and copayments. Young people already go through enough without having to worry about where to get health care,” shared State Senator Velmanette Montgomery. “I have 20 centers across my district and I cannot express how heavily families rely on being able to access these centers, especially mental health services.”

"School-Based Health Centers are often the first line of defense against costly hospitalization for many school-aged children and youth in high need areas. The clinics provide preventive services for conditions like epileptic seizures, asthma, diabetes and nutritional deficiencies. Few centers offer mental health services that help patients with depression, anxiety and early stages of eating disorders. An income tax check-off will help provide funding to help expand services and develop new sites to provide these vital health services," said Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz. "Let's make every effort to ensure funding streams for these centers. Increasing access and funding to these health clinics will ensure that our children and families have access to essential health services that could potentially save lives."

"As the operator of the state's largest school based health center program we applaud New York State Assembly Assistant Speaker Felix Ortiz, and State Senator Velmanette Montgomery for their efforts to get this legislation passed," said Larry K. McReynolds, Executive Director, Family Health Centers at NYU Langone. "We also would like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo for signing this important bill into law. School health dollars have been at risk before and this will go a long way to help sustain critical health care services for children of working families throughout the state."

"The Alliance is pleased Governor Cuomo has signed S4487-B to create an SBHC fund check off on personal income taxes. We are grateful for the support of Senator Montgomery and Assemblyman Ortiz for this legislation, which will help to assure that the state's 255 SBHCs will have adequate resources to continue to provide services to underserved children and adolescents," said Sarah Murphy, Executive Director, New York School Based Health Alliance.

New York leads the nation in School Based Health with 255 centers, 158 of which are in New York City. SBHCs provide healthcare to over 200,000 children including primary, dental, mental, and reproductive health care services, on-site in their schools. They provide access to care to every child who enters their door regardless of insurance or immigration status. SBHCs help children manage chronic conditions such as asthma and emergencies are easily avoided. SBHCs save the State money through prevention and improve the academic performance, graduation rates, and health outcomes of young people throughout New York.

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