



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mike Martucci

## Martucci Opposes Cuts to Disabilities Services

MIKE MARTUCCI April 30, 2021

| ISSUE: [OPWDD](#), [DISABILITIES SERVICES](#)



### *Joins Colleagues to Call For Delay of Planned Rate Reductions by NYS OPWDD*

**ALBANY, NY – Senator Mike Martucci (R-C-I, Hudson Valley/Catskills)**, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Disabilities, wrote to the Commissioner of the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to voice serious concerns about their plan to implement rate reductions to the voluntary residential program. The proposed cuts will have significant impacts on individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and would result in a \$238 million annualized cut to the system. The most egregious cuts slash reimbursement to voluntary providers by 50% whenever individuals with I/DD leave to spend time with family or are admitted to the hospital for care. The proposal also imposes an annual “cap” of 96 days of therapeutic leave, after which

reimbursement would be reduced to zero, and eliminates the occupancy adjustment resulting from vacancies.

“As Ranking Member of the Disabilities Committee, I strongly oppose these outrageous cuts,” **said Senator Martucci**. “We successfully fought large cuts proposed in the state budget. Now, here we are a few weeks later staring down more cuts. In a year when we received a massive infusion of cash from the Federal government and also raised taxes by \$4.3 billion, there is simply no excuse for cutting any service to our most vulnerable New Yorkers.”

OPWDD’s planned rate reductions are due to take effect tomorrow, May 1, 2021. There is clear consensus across party lines that the proposed actions will hurt residents, families, and service providers. If enacted, the system will be negatively affected and providers’ abilities to deliver the essential supports and services that individuals with I/DD require will be hindered.

I/DD New Yorkers and their families have suffered disproportionately during the COVID-19 pandemic and voluntary providers have invested millions in unreimbursed costs to protect the safety of their residents and staff. In the letter to OPWDD, Senator Martucci and his colleagues urged an immediate delay of at least 90 days. This period will allow for additional stakeholder input and the ability to properly explore alternative solutions.

“My office hears from the families of individuals in the I/DD community on a regular basis about the issues they’ve faced during the pandemic, including an order to readmit COVID-positive patients to facilities,” **Martucci said**. “The recent state budget provided \$2.1 billion to undocumented immigrants and ex-cons but now three weeks later OPWDD is going to pull the rug out from under disabled New Yorkers? We cannot let that happen. We must delay these cuts and bring everyone to the table to address this once and for all.”

*Mike Martucci is serving his first term as the Senator for New York's 42nd State Senate District which comprises all of Sullivan County and parts of Orange, Ulster, and Delaware counties. He is the ranking member of the Senate Standing Committees on Disabilities and Commerce, Economic Development And Small Business.*

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