



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Samra G. Brouk

## Senator Samra Brouk: Bill Allowing More Mental Health Professionals at Children's Camps Signed Into Law

SAMRA G. BROUK July 19, 2021

| ISSUE: **MENTAL HEALTH, ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, SUMMER CAMPS**

**ALBANY, NY** - Today, a bill sponsored by Senate Mental Health Committee Chair Samra G. Brouk to ensure that our children's camps can employ mental health and other licensed professionals was signed into law (S4345-A).

"Our state's children have been through so much this year because of COVID-19, and it is especially important that they have access to mental health care," **said Senator Brouk**. "With the signing of this bill, parents can rest assured that sending their child to camp will not mean sending them away from expert mental health care should they need it."

Before this law, camps had limited ability to staff certain licensed professionals. S4345-A changes that, authorizing licensed psychologists, social workers, and mental health practitioners to be contracted by camps. This bill also authorizes professionals licensed as physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists/audiologists, athletic trainers, and applied behavior analysts to practice at camps for children with developmental disabilities.

The isolation that was necessary during COVID-19 disrupted many aspects of our lives, and

was especially difficult for the state's children. Young students had to adapt to remote learning, cancelled athletic activities, and forgoing the celebration of milestones like graduation. Now that the state of emergency has been lifted, parents may consider sending their children to camp to enjoy activities and learning in a more social setting. Senator Brouk is working to ensure that even at camp, our children have access to expert care from licensed mental health professionals.

Senator Brouk is serving her first term as the senator to the 55th Senate District. As Chair of the Senate Mental Health Committee, she has worked in the Senate to increase access to mental health care services, recruit and maintain a diverse network of mental health care practitioners and destigmatize seeking mental health treatment, especially within communities of color. In addition to her work on mental health issues, she secured historic funding for our communities in this year's New York State Budget, with a three-year commitment to fully funding Foundation Aid and over \$1 billion dollars in emergency relief to New York's small business community.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2021-S4345A**

- 
- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Authorizes summer camps to hire certain licensed professionals to provide services

February 03, 2021

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Samra G. Brouk

Do you support this bill?