

**Written Testimony of
Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization**

**New York State Joint Legislative Public Hearing on
2015-16 Executive Health Budget
Monday, February 2nd, 2014
10:00 AM**

Chairs:
Senator Kemp Hannon
Assemblyman Richard Gottfried

Submitted by:
Denise Young, Executive Director

The Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization (FDRHPO), is a cooperative health partnership of hospitals, clinics, physicians, public health officials and military medical leadership with a common goal to improve healthcare delivery for the residents of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties. The FDRHPO provides a platform to analyze the existing health care delivery system and seek new opportunities to leverage health care resources. This regional approach meets the needs of the military and civilian populations in the Fort Drum region and significantly strengthens the North Country healthcare system.

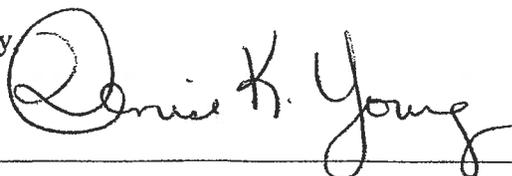
In the Governor's Executive Budget this year, rural health was bundled with healthcare workforce initiatives and identified for a 15% total cut and/or contract cancellations for eight programs critical to rural health. Among these is the Rural Health Network Development program funding which supports our regional initiatives. In partnership with the Association of Rural Health Networks, we are asking you separate rural health from the workforce programs and prevent cuts to the rural health programming. By restoring Rural Health Network Development dollars to \$6.4 million and Rural Access to \$9.8 million, we, as NYS Rural Health Networks, can collaboratively work to transform our regional, rural healthcare system.

As a receipt of Rural Health Network Development grant dollars, the FDRHPO is committed to assisting our regional health system achieve the CMS triple aim by focusing on: providing ongoing access to accurate and timely health data for intelligent decision support for the individual patient, for the community, for the provider and for health planning; utilizing data in a coordinated campaign to drive personal and population change; and developing a systematic plan to increase access to care at the early intervention and prevention level.

By restoring Rural Health Network Development and Rural Access dollars, our network can ensure a rural health focus on population health initiatives which require long-term planning and a strategic mindset to address and advance statewide initiatives such as the Delivery System Repayment Incentive Program, the Population Health Improvement Program, the NYS Prevention Agenda, and the State Health Innovation Plan.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (315) 755-2020 ext. 10 or at dyoung@fdrhpo.org.

Sincerely



Denise K. Young, Executive Director