



# S²AY Rural Health Network, Inc.

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## Written Testimony of the S²AY Rural Health Network, Inc.

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

### S²AY Network Public Health Directors

Bob Page  
 Chemung County

Jennifer Rodriguez  
 Livingston County

Mary Beer  
 Ontario County

Marcia Kasprzyk  
 Schuyler County

Vickie Swinchart  
 Seneca County

Vicki Fuerst  
 Steuben County

Diane Devlin  
 Wayne County

Deb Minor  
 Yates County

### S²AY Network Staff

Andrea Haradon

Betsy Hull

Dawn Bush

Kim Arnold

Lauren Snyder

Theresa Lahr

Valerie Woodside

Chairs:  
 Senator Kemp Hannon  
 Assemblyman Richard Gottfried

Submitted by:  
 Andrea J. Haradon, Network Coordinator

The S²AY Rural Health Network, Inc. is comprised of eight County Public Health Departments in the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier region of New York State, including Chemung, Livingston, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates. The S²AY Network's Board of Directors includes a County Legislator, Provider Representative, Consumer Representative and Public Health Director from each partner county.

It has come to our attention that the Governor's Executive Budget proposes to bundle Rural Health Network Development program and Rural Health Care Access Development program funding together with seven otherwise unrelated health workforce development programs, and collectively funding for these programs is to be cut by more than 15%. We are respectfully asking that State funding designated for rural New Yorkers be preserved by:

- Un-bundling the Rural Health Development Network and Rural Health Access Development Programs funding from workforce. They do not belong on the same budget line as the scope of these programs is much broader than just workforce-related.
- Restoring the Rural Health Development Network funding to \$6.4 million and Rural Health Care Access Development funding to \$9.8 million.

Mission: To integrate, promote and expand appropriate components of the Public Health service delivery system to improve health outcomes for all residents of the Network region.

Funded by the New York State Department of Health

## S<sup>2</sup>AY Rural Health Network, Inc.

The S<sup>2</sup>AY Rural Health Network began as a partnership of three Public Health Departments in 1997 and serves 8 rural Health Departments today. Our Rural Health Network Development Program funding (\$235,000) provides the core infrastructure for the Network's efforts to integrate, promote and expand appropriate components of the Public Health service delivery system to improve health outcomes for all residents of our Network region including:

- Informing both the Finger Lakes PPS and the Southern Tier Region PPS regarding rural resources and needs as DSRIP unfolds in our region;
- Improving access to health care by securing funding for and administering the In-Person Assistor/Navigator Program and the Community Health Advocate program.
- Implementing regional efforts to address priorities identified in the Counties' Community Health Improvement Plans including:
  - Reducing obesity rates by increasing breastfeeding rates in the region;
  - Reducing obesity rates by increasing access to locally grown foods through our Farm to Cafeteria initiative;
  - Reducing hypertension by improving the health care systems ability to identify and monitor patients with high blood pressure.
  - Reducing the number of diabetics in the region by implementing the National Diabetes Prevention Program that identifies and provides services to pre-diabetics in our region.

The S<sup>2</sup>AY Network has been successful in leveraging Rural Health Network Development funding dollars to bring more than \$1.25 million in additional funding to support the health care system in our rural area. Please don't allow the small amount of funds designated for rural New York to be reduced in bundling it with workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Andrea J. Haradon  
Network Coordinator