



NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE SENATOR **JAMES SKOUFIS**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 7, 2022

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****PRESS RELEASE****

Skoufis Bill Establishing State Disability Rights Office Signed Into Law

Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) announced that his bill to establish an agency to function as an advocate for the rights of people with disabilities across the state has been signed into law. The legislation, [S1836](#), levels the playing field for millions of New Yorkers, ensuring they receive the services and support they need to exercise their full rights as citizens.

Skoufis first advanced this bill while serving in the Assembly to re-open the inoperative Office of the Advocate for People with Disabilities, established in 1983 by Governor Mario Cuomo. Andrew Cuomo went on to close the office early in his tenure, leaving many disabled New Yorkers without a voice within the agencies of state government.

“For too long, New Yorkers living with disabilities lacked the agency-level support they desperately deserved,” said **Senator Skoufis**. “After years of hard work and determination by countless disability rights advocates and impacted families, these citizens will finally have a seat at the table to help shape policies that directly impact them.”

“On behalf of the New York Association on Independent Living and Disability community, I can’t thank Senator Skoufis enough for his tireless and unwavering efforts, sponsoring this critically important legislation and advocating together with key disability leaders,” said **Independent Living, Inc. President & CEO Douglas Hovey**. “Passing the chief disability officer legislation will ensure that we have strong voice and representation in Albany for all people with disabilities.”

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