



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senator Steve Rhoads Stands Up for New Yorkers with Disabilities – Urges Action to Fix CDPAP

STEVEN D. RHOADS March 8, 2025

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On Friday, New York State Senator Steve Rhoads, a member of the Senate Health Committee, held a press conference at his District Office alongside disability advocates with a clear message: Don't play politics with our healthcare. The group called for urgent action on Senate Bill S.1189, a bipartisan measure co-sponsored by 39 senators—representing over 60% of the Senate—which aims to repeal the single fiscal intermediary (FI) mandate for New York's Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) and introduce critical

transparency and oversight reforms.

Senator Rhoads has been a steadfast advocate for his constituents, fighting against the Governor's changes to the CDPAP program. From hosting rallies and writing to the Governor and legislative leaders to standing with the quarter of a million New Yorkers impacted by this policy shift, Senator Rhoads has been vocal in his opposition and unwavering in his support for those who rely on CDPAP.

With the April 1st deadline looming, reports indicate that less than half of vulnerable enrollees have begun the required transition, posing a serious risk of a healthcare crisis. After the deadline, all the existing fiscal intermediaries, by law, cannot process payroll or due billing which means disabled people will be left without services and that's a potential disaster in the making. Senator Rhoads is calling on the Health Committee to advance S.1189 and bring it to a full Senate vote before it is too late.

"This bill is about real people—the most vulnerable members of our communities—who rely on these services every single day and who are being ignored by the Governor and legislative leaders up in Albany. We cannot play games with their healthcare," **said Senator Rhoads.**

The transition to a single FI for CDPAP has been disastrous for Medicaid enrollees and their personal assistants. Less than half of the elderly and disabled New Yorkers who depend on CDPAP have begun the transition process, creating widespread uncertainty and fear among families and caregivers. Concerns remain regarding the state and PPL's mismanagement of the transition process, the lack of transparency from the New York State Department of Health, and whether PPL is capable of successfully administering New York's CDPAP program—especially given reports of issues in other states where PPL has managed similar, but much smaller, programs. Even the New York Health Plan Association, which represents health insurers, warned the Hochul administration in February that the transition was not

proceeding as planned. To put it in perspective, in January 2024, Massachusetts set a 19-month timeline to transition just 70,000 caregivers in its program to a new single FI. In stark contrast, New York has only three to four months to transition over 250,000 consumers and approximately 400,000 caregivers. This timeline is both unrealistic and dangerous for the disabled individuals the program is meant to support.

Senate Bill S.1189 would:

- **Repeal the single FI mandate**, ensuring multiple intermediaries can continue serving enrollees and preventing unnecessary service disruptions.
- **Protect access to essential healthcare services**, eliminating bureaucratic barriers and rushed policy changes that could leave vulnerable New Yorkers without care.
- **Enhance transparency and oversight** by requiring:
 - Mandatory reporting for all FIs.
 - A personal assistant registry.
 - Annual compliance reports.
 - Comptroller oversight of FI contracts.
- **Improve care quality and accountability** by:
 - Requiring all FIs to be licensed.
 - Mandating character and competence reviews by the Commissioner of Health (COH).
 - Establishing structured licensing and oversight processes.
 - Setting minimum training requirements for personal assistants.
- **Ensure enrollees remain in control of their healthcare decisions**, preventing them from being forced into a chaotic and confusing transition.

The advocates at the press conference urged the Health Committee, led by its Chair, Senator Gustavo Rivera, to immediately advance S.1189 so that it can be brought to a full Senate vote. New Yorkers with disabilities deserve stability and continuity of care—they cannot afford to wait until the last minute for legislative action.

“This is about people’s lives, and we need real common-sense solutions—not bureaucratic failures,” **said Senator Rhoads**. “With bipartisan support and a majority in the Senate, this bill has the votes to pass. It’s time for leadership to bring it forward. Instead of talking about action, we need to take action. We call on Governor Hochul and legislative leaders to put politics aside and prioritize the healthcare needs of New Yorkers now. We have a Health Committee meeting next week and I hope to see this on that agenda.”

The clock is ticking, and failure to act will leave thousands of elderly and disabled New Yorkers without the essential care they rely on. This is not a game or an abstract policy debate—these are real lives on the line. Senator Rhoads and disability advocates urge the Health Committee to do the right thing: advance S.1189 and allow the Senate to vote on this critical measure. **Senator Rhoads said**, “If they are not willing to advance that bill for a floor vote, at least advance legislation to push pause and allow hundreds of thousands of individuals to enroll and provide stabilities for their lives. New Yorkers are counting on us—we must not let them down.”

Jose Hernandez, Community Organizer with Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of New York State (CDPAANYs), said, “The CDPAP program has allowed me to get a High School diploma, Associate’s Degree, and Bachelor’s Degree. It has allowed me to live a healthy life in the community surrounded by the people I love and cared for by the people I choose. I have been in the CDPAP program for 20 years, disabled for 30 years, and I have never been more

afraid. The Governor has completely turned her back on us. PPL doesn't have a good track record. I have heard from many people who have started the process and it's a confusing mess. You don't know if on April 1 if you will be able to receive services."

Alison Giangregorio, a local disability advocate, said, "We are 24 days before the CDPAP Program switches over to PPL. I'm not sure who's responsible for the timeline on how to get thousands of consumers and caregivers registered by the April 1 deadline, but whoever made this decision is very bad at planning. Consumers and their caregivers are left with little or no support as they go through this process. As a matter of fact, the people who live on Long Island only received notices on February 19th that the program was even switching over. The process to register can only be completed via computer and paper applications are not readily available. It could take two to three weeks for paper application to actually be sent to someone who cannot use a computer to fill out the process. March is Developmental Disability Awareness Month, and I find it disheartening that thousands of New Yorkers and people with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, and our seniors are going to be left behind in April."

Susan McCormack, Executive Director, Long Island Center for Independent Living, Inc. (LICIL), said, "LICIL is working hard to assist in the transition to a single FI, but we continue to find that consumers are extremely hesitant to proceed. They feel rushed and have many questions. Ultimately, we strongly support a pause in the process so that all stakeholders – especially consumers and their PA's – can face these changes with the utmost confidence. The timeline is not doable. They have to slow it down. They're not listening, and I hate to say this, but people will die if we don't slow this down. Unlike what the governor has called us, which is like the sleazy middleman, we are not sleazy middleman. We assist these consumers in signing up, we help the aids to get all of their paperwork filled out, if a consumer is

experiencing problems, we assist them, and we even have workshops.”

Gina Barbara, a long-time disability advocate and representative from Downstate New York

ADAPT, said, “This is enough! We need to put a hold on this transition immediately. Not tomorrow. Not next week. Not on March 28th when the system goes off. S.1189 is a start to that that resolution that we need passed as soon as possible. We've been up to the capitol more times than I'd like to know and we are going to continue to be up in the capitol. We are not going anywhere. We need a solution and S.1189—we need this immediately. No more time can waste.”

New York State Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick said, “The transition to a single fiscal intermediary for CDPAP is already proving to be a disaster, putting care for hundreds of thousands of vulnerable New Yorkers at risk. With the deadline fast approaching and an alarmingly low number of enrollees registered, we cannot afford to wait for a full-blown crisis. Senate Bill 1189 provides a clear solution—ensuring continuity of care, increasing oversight, and preventing bureaucratic mismanagement from disrupting essential services. With strong bipartisan support, this bill must move forward now to protect the rights and well-being of those who rely on CDPAP.”

New York State Senator Mario Mattera said, “With a deadline looming very soon, New Yorkers who rely on CDPAP are understandably concerned and that is causing fear. Our offices are getting contacted daily by these residents and this hurried and confusing approach is unfair to them. It is time to rescind the policy put forth by Governor Hochul to ensure that our most vulnerable residents continue to get the care they need and deserve.”