



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas P. Morahan

Governor Proposes Timothy's Law To Become Permanent

THOMAS P. MORAHAN May 5, 2009

(Albany) New York State Senator Thomas P. Morahan praised Governor Paterson for announcing today his support for making Timothy's Law permanent. The law requires insurers issuing group or school blanket health insurance policies or contracts in New York to provide a minimum of 30 inpatient days and 20 outpatient visits (30/20 benefit) for the treatment of mental health conditions. Senator Morahan, former chairman of the Senate's Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee is credited by many mental health advocates for securing Senate passage of Timothy's Law. Timothy's Law took effect on January 1, 2007, and is currently set to expire on December 31, 2009.

Timothy's Law requires large group health insurance policies (with more than 50 employees or members) to provide coverage for adults and children diagnosed with biologically based mental illnesses and children diagnosed with serious emotional disturbances at the same level of coverage as is provided for other health conditions.

"Timothy's Law has played a significant role in helping eliminate the stigma surrounding mental illness and those with mental health conditions that too often cause people to go without needed care and treatment," said Morahan, who currently serves as the Ranking Member of the Senate's Mental and Developmental Disabilities Committee. "I am pleased the Governor has accepted a recent report recommending that Timothy's Law become

permanent.”

Timothy’s Law is named in memory of Timothy O’Clair, a twelve year old boy from Rotterdam (Schenectady County) who completed suicide in March 2001. Timothy’s parents were unable to obtain the mental health treatment they needed for their son due to health insurance coverage limits. Timothy O’Clair would have turned 21 years old on May 5, 2009.

For a copy of the Timothy’s Law report, visit

http://www.ins.state.ny.us/timothy/tim_super_rpt_052009.pdf.

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