



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo's Autism Insurance Reform Legislation Approved by State Assembly

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. June 21, 2010

| ISSUE: [HEALTH](#)

Individuals With Autism Would No Longer Be Forced to Spend Tens of Thousands of Dollars Out of Pocket on Diagnosis and Treatment Under Proposed Law

State Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. today announced that the New York State Assembly has joined the State Senate in approving legislation he sponsored to provide insurance coverage for autism screening, diagnosis and treatment in New York State. Currently, individuals with autism are routinely denied insurance benefits for treatment of their disorder, forcing them to spend tens of thousands of dollars out of their own pockets to cover treatment costs.

Senator Fuschillo (R-Merrick) said, "Families should not be forced to face financial ruin to get care for a loved one with autism, but that is exactly what is happening now because many insurance companies refuse to cover treatment costs. Ensuring that clinically proven treatments are covered by insurance will stop families from having to choose between going broke or getting treatment for a loved one with autism. I am pleased that the Assembly has joined the Senate in passing this legislation, and I urge Governor Paterson to sign it into law."

The legislation (S. 7000-B) would require private insurance companies to provide coverage for diagnosis of autism and for medically approved treatments for individuals with autism throughout their lifetime.

Michael Giangregorio of Merrick, who has a son with autism, said, "I am extremely grateful to the members of the Senate and Assembly for providing assistance to my family and the thousands of other families across the state who have a loved one with autism. We all face numerous challenges to provide them with the care they need, and for many the financial burden becomes too much to bear. This legislation would greatly improve families' abilities to get care for their loved ones. My family and I greatly appreciate Senator Fuschillo's unwavering support for individuals with autism, because this would not have happened without his efforts."

Senator Fuschillo has long advocated for children with autism. He authored a law to ensure that patients with autism receive equitable coverage for care from insurance companies. He also wrote the law authorizing the issuance of special autism license plates that raise money for a state autism awareness and research fund. Currently, there are more than 20 states that have passed laws for autism insurance coverage.

The legislation, which was unanimously passed by the State Senate on June 9th, will soon be sent to Governor Paterson.

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