



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## Senator Carlucci's Senior Advisory Task Force Announce Plan to Help Senior's Afford The Hudson Valley Senator & Task Force Members

DAVID CARLUCCI December 19, 2013

| ISSUE: **AGING, EPIC (ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE PROGRAM), SENIORS**



*“Seniors deserve to live their golden years in comfort, not in poverty.”*

NANUET - Senator David Carlucci's (D-Rockland/Westchester) Senior Advisory Task Force announced a plan today that promises to ease the burden of affordability for seniors throughout the Hudson Valley. Even though seniors put in a lifetime of hard work, many still live on a fixed income that can barely put food on the table. This proposal promises to

provide real relief for seniors.

Senator Carlucci said, “New Yorkers have always felt if they put in a hard day’s work, they will be rewarded with the ability to afford the American dream. That dream is starting to slip away for our seniors, many of who live below the federal poverty line. Seniors deserve to live their golden years in comfort, not in poverty. This common sense proposal will go a long way toward making sure seniors can continue to afford the American dream and live their retirement in comfort. I look forward to working together with my Senior Advisory Task Force and my colleagues in Albany to advocate for these proposals.”

### **Expanding the EPIC Program**

The current population of New Yorker's over 65, which stands at approximately 2.6 million today, is expected to rise to 4.6 million by the year 2040. Many seniors rely on fixed incomes, receiving on average \$1,234 in Social Security benefits and \$516.90 in Supplemental Security Income monthly. The challenges of living on a fixed income are compounded by the Hudson Valley’s high cost of living, including the increasing cost of prescription drugs.

In 2012 prescription drug prices rose 3.6%, double the 1.7% inflation rate. These numbers do not tell the whole story. Roughly 562,000 of New York’s seniors live under 150% of the federal poverty line and more than 814,000 under 200% of the federal poverty level.

Such circumstances make it extremely difficult for seniors.

That’s why Senator Carlucci and his Senior Advisory task force will advocate for a plan to expand EPIC eligibility by increasing the threshold from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for an individual and \$50,000 to 100,000 for a couple. This increase will ensure seniors will not find themselves picking and choosing between many of life’s necessities; a choice no one should have to make.

This expansion is estimated to help an additional 10,000 individuals and 10,000 couples.

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