



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Continues Push to Keep Wny Children's Psychiatric Center in West Seneca Open

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN December 26, 2013

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

ERIE COUNTY - Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) was joined by several of his Western New York senate colleagues today in calling for Gov. Andrew Cuomo to again reconsider the closing of the Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center in West Seneca and relocating its patients to the Buffalo Psychiatric Center in North Buffalo.

"Concerns have been raised across the state about closing and consolidating specialized mental health facilities and in recent weeks we have seen the Governor address those concerns in the Southern Tier and the North Country. I am now calling on him to take a closer look at our facility in West Seneca and to again consider the negative impact its closure could have on the very unique patients it serves – children," Gallivan said.

Gallivan is also a sponsor of the "Freeze Unsafe Closures Now Act" (S.5986), which places a moratorium on closing the Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center in West Seneca and all targeted facilities until April 1, 2015, providing lawmakers, the executive and mental health experts time to devise a plan that is more responsive to the needs and challenges of Western New York's mentally ill.

“Children with mental health problems are very different patients than adults and are best treated in a facility tailored to their unique needs and challenges. Transferring child-patients from the Western New York Children’s Psychiatric Center to the adult-oriented Buffalo Psychiatric Center will not only remove them from an environment where they and their families feel comfortable, but could seriously jeopardize their mental health and treatment plans,” Gallivan continued. “I intend do everything in my power to keep the doors of this facility open to Western New Yorkers who need its services.”

The Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center opened in West Seneca in 1970. The center takes seriously emotionally disturbed children between the ages of 4 and 18 years old from 19 Western New York counties. Children who are admitted to the facility have lives scarred by trauma such as sexual molestation, physical abuse, bullying, death of parents, abandonment, neglect, and intense family conflicts. Despite the significant volume from these 19 counties the Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center has the lowest re-institutionalization rate of any facility in New York State.