



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Transportation Funding Secured by Senator Young for Allegany County

CATHARINE YOUNG November 23, 2014

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Supplemental Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation Payment of \$36,287 for Allegany County

ALBANY - Elderly, disabled, and other local residents who rely on efficient public transportation options can cheer the news announced by Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) that much needed relief for non-emergency Medicaid transportation systems is coming to Allegany County.

“Residents who depend on public transportation options to make medical visits and other important appointments will be happy to hear that these services will remain reliable and available. The local buses used are vital for many elderly citizens, veterans, and disabled residents who do not have other options,” said Senator Young.

Changes were made in the 2010-11 state budget that gave the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Health (DOH) the authority to assume management of non-emergency Medicaid transportation across the state. The law’s intent was to streamline local transportation systems, reduce the local burden of administration, save Medicaid dollars, and improve the quality of services. DOH awarded Medical Answering Services (MAS) a contract to manage Western New York’s non-emergency Medicaid transportation system.

However, implementation has caused several counties to suffer financial hardship. For this reason, in this year’s state budget Senator Young fought for a hold harmless provision that would provide a supplemental Medicaid payment to county’s whose non-emergency Medicaid

transportation services have been adversely affected.

Allegany County's First Transit is among those who have faced hardship as a result of the changes. With a reimbursement of \$36,287 for Allegany County, losses will now be covered and they will finally receive the assistance they deserve.

"Senator Young has always been cognizant of the needs of Allegany County, especially for our residents that are challenged the most. Her ability to take those needs and have them addressed at the state level are very much appreciated," said Chairman of the Allegany County Board of Legislators Curtis Crandall.

"I have been very concerned and remain attentive to how changes to non-emergency Medicaid transportation in New York were being implemented and what the impact on rural Upstate localities and their residents would be. First Transit has long been a reliable and efficient model that has served residents well. The burdens that have been laid upon them by DOH needed to be corrected immediately, which is why I was glad to be able to secure a solution in the state budget," said Senator Young.

"I will be sure to continue working to ensure that the originally stated intent of the changes are followed - to improve quality while achieving savings and efficiencies. Routes relied upon by residents must be protected and those most familiar with local systems need to be able to do the job they do so well," said Senator Young.

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