



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Keep Making The Case

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 8, 2013



The Cuomo administration can go ahead and keep on claiming it's fiscally necessary for New York in the long run to shut down inpatient services at the Elmira Psychiatric Center (Elmira PC) and close the Monterey Shock Incarceration Correctional Facility, but it's important that we continue to let Governor Cuomo know that these moves don't make any fiscal common sense at all.

In fact, it appears hard to improve upon the Elmira PC's record of fiscal responsibility. The same holds true for Monterey.

But in the end this goes well beyond dollars and cents. It cuts to the core of the quality of New York State's systems of mental health and correctional services.

Point two, then, is programmatic quality. We can clearly make the case that the Elmira PC has been and remains an irreplaceable lifeline for thousands upon thousands of patients and their families throughout the Southern Tier, Finger Lakes and western New York.

And we can easily show that the staff of Monterey, past and present, has turned around numerous lives that were once at a dead-end but that, today, are productive and successful.

Again, the state's own standards rank the Elmira PC as No. 1 in adult inpatient mental health care; and inmates that complete the shock incarceration program at Monterey have the lowest recidivism rate.

These facilities truly save lives.

But we've got our work cut out for us to keep making the case.

Read more in my weekly column, "[Keep making the case](#)"