



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

## Kaminsky Hosts Mental Health Roundtable on Crisis in Insurance Coverage

TODD KAMINSKY October 3, 2018



(Mineola, New York) — Today, Senators Todd Kaminsky and Elaine Phillips hosted a round table discussion on adequately locating timely, affordable and quality mental health and addiction care. The event followed a stunning report issued by North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center entitled Project Access., which surveyed 650 Long Islanders and examined the difficulty patients and their families have when accessing mental health and substance abuse care. In response, Kaminsky and Phillips previously wrote to New York State Department of Financial Services (“DFS”) Superintendent Maria Vullo, requesting that she

investigate the lack of adequate insurance coverage for mental health treatment.

“In today’s day and age, it is more important than ever for us to ensure that individuals who have the courage to seek mental health and addiction counseling services receive the treatment they need,” said Senator Todd Kaminsky. “I was pleased to host this bipartisan forum today to make further headway on this critical issue facing our communities, and look forward to continue to advocate for mental health parity in Albany.”

“The landscape for providing mental health and addiction care has changed significantly over the last few years and we need to be responsive to those changes, particularly in light of recent reports showing inadequate mental health coverage,” said Senator Elaine Phillips. “Discussions such as this will help us to better understand how we can make the pathways to mental health care more accessible to those most in need.”

“The Parity for All roundtable was another important step in further uniting stakeholders – providers, consumers, advocates and legislators – to work collectively towards enforcement of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act. Improved enforcement means timely and affordable access to quality mental health and addictions care. This bipartisan landmark legislation, now ten years old, has a long way to go to ensure compliance by health insurers and enforcement by New York State government. Access delayed is access denied. Our children’s lives are on the line. We need to do better,” said Andrew Malekoff, Executive Director and CEO, North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center.

“We cannot allow the mental health needs of our communities to be compounded by access issues that can be overcome through targeted efforts in New York State. I commend Senators Kaminsky and Phillips for their bipartisan commitment to address access to mental health care,” said Dr. Kristie Golden, Associate Director of Operations for the Neurosciences,

Stony Brook University.

The event was held at the NYU Langone-Winthrop Research Institute in Mineola. The event included members from the North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center, the Legal Action Center, West Hempstead School District, Stony Brook University Medical Center, and Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling Services.

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