



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

## Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie And New York State Senate Democratic Majority Expands Protections For New Yorkers With Disabilities

JONATHAN TIMM June 3, 2019

| ISSUE: **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

(ALBANY) Senator Myrie and the Senate Democratic Majority passed legislation that will help protect New Yorkers with disabilities.

The bills passed by Senator Myrie and the Senate Majority include legislation that will create an advocacy office for New Yorkers living with disabilities and expand Medicaid coverage for applied behavior analysis services for people who have autism spectrum disorder.

Additionally, these bills will also provide housing protections for New Yorkers with disabilities living with therapy animals and allow tenants with disabilities to terminate their leases to move into housing that is more appropriate.

“New Yorkers living with disabilities are too often overlooked and under-supported,” Senator Myrie said. “We have the resources to provide everyone adequate protections and care to everyone, regardless of disability, and that’s what these bills will provide.”

The package of legislation advanced by the Senate Majority includes:

- **Housing Provisions For Therapy Animals:** This bill, S.2705, introduced by Senator Tim Kennedy, codifies outlying portions of the federal Fair Housing Act into New York State

law to afford more complete, explicit protections on not only persons with disabilities, but particularly veterans suffering from PTSD.

- **Accessible Electronic Information Act:** This bill, S.3599, introduced by Senator Kevin Parker, enacts the accessible electronic information act for blind and disabled persons by creating a new fund in the state finance law and authorizes a not-for-profit entity to administer the program.
- **Safeguarding Cash Accounts:** This bill, S.1672A, sponsored by Senator John Brooks, establishes a uniform set of procedures and guidelines for the management of cash accounts for residents who live in individualized residential alternatives. Under this legislation, OPWDD will be required to implement the recommendations made in the Inspector General Report in order to better safeguard OPWDD residents' personal allowance accounts.
- **Study on Potential Debit Card Usage in Residential Facilities:** This bill, S.5538, sponsored by Senator John Brooks, will direct the commissioner of the Office for People with Development Disabilities (OPWDD) to conduct a study on the viability of providing debit cards to individuals in licensed residential facilities.
- **Closed Captioning on Public Televisions:** This bill, S.1650, sponsored by Senator James Skoufis, will require, upon request, places of public accommodations to enable closed captioning on televisions in public areas.
- **Accessibility to Public Services with OPWDD:** This bill, S.5347, sponsored by Senator David Carlucci, will make information on services offered by the Office for People with Development Disabilities (OPWDD) and the process of receiving these services available on the office website.
- **Advocacy Office for People with Disabilities:** This bill, S.1674, introduced by Senator James Skoufis, creates an office that will function as an advocate for the rights of people with

disabilities to help receive services and support that enable them to make informed choices and decisions.

- Ability to Terminate Lease: This bill, S.3891, introduced by Senator Luis Sepulveda, amends the real property law to allow those with disabilities to terminate their lease to move into housing that better suits their needs.
- Expands Medicaid Coverage to Behavioral Analysis: This bill, S.1821, introduced by Senator Gustavo Rivera, creates health care coverage for New Yorkers who rely on Medicaid to receive coverage for behavior analysis for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder.

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Contact: Jonathan Timm, [jt.nysenate@gmail.com](mailto:jt.nysenate@gmail.com), 313-618-7005