



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

State Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie and Brooklyn Electeds Condemn “Cruel And Inhumane” Cuts Proposed by Governor Cuomo to Hospitals Amidst Covid-19 Crisis

ZELLNOR MYRIE March 27, 2020

| ISSUE: [MEDICAID REDESIGN TEAM II](#), [COVID-19](#), [HEALTH/MEDICAID](#)

BROOKLYN — New York State Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie and five members of the New York State legislature from Brooklyn wrote a scathing letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo on Friday in response to his proposed Medicaid cut that would slash funding to hospitals in Central Brooklyn by \$38 million.

“We write to you today with few words and short time: the proposed cuts to our hospitals in Central Brooklyn are cruel, inhumane, and unacceptable,” the officials write in their letter.

The proposed cuts would hit major hospitals that serve many of Brooklyn's majority black, low-income communities.

As the officials write in their letter, Kings County Hospital is already operating at 95 percent capacity and using hand sanitizer to clean and reuse face masks. Doctors at SUNY Downstate are being asked to split ventilators between patients, and Brookdale Hospital has frontline staff home sick due to COVID-19 infection.

Meanwhile, the New York Times reported that another Brooklyn hospital is in “disaster mode,” while another hospital in the city used trash bags as protective gear and the NYC Health + Hospitals system is soliciting cash donations.

The officials cited Cuomo’s remarks at his press conference on Tuesday. “Earlier this week, you said that as a state, ‘We are going to fight every way we can to save every life that we can, because that's what I think it means to be an American...We're not going to accept a premise that human life is disposable. We're not going to put a dollar figure on human life,’” the officials write.

“We agree. As such, we cannot, in good conscience, accept a budget that includes these cuts. We urge you to reject them and find a more prudent way to protect the most vulnerable in the state during these challenging times. Our constituents’ lives depend on it,” the letter reads.

The proposed cut comes as part of the governor’s Medicaid Redesign Team (MRTII), which was formed last month to address a Medicaid budget deficit.

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