



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

## SERINO & TEDISCO URGE SIGNIFICANT STATE INVESTMENT IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

SUSAN SERINO December 28, 2021

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ALBANY, NY – Senators Sue Serino and Jim Tedisco today are urging Governor Kathy Hochul to make a significant investment in mental health services and treatment beds in the upcoming State Budget.

In a letter to the Governor, Senators Serino and Tedisco urge the state to focus on providing affordable services for New York's youth and ask that the state work toward bolstering

mental health services by streamlining the licensing process, incentivizing careers in the mental health field, and enabling qualified out-of-state professionals to practice in state to help meet immediate needs.

*“The challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have placed enormous strain on a mental healthcare system that was already struggling to effectively meet the immense need,” said Senator Serino. “Dutchess County is fortunate to be home to a model 24/7 Crisis Stabilization Center, however, I hear from far too many neighbors who are unable to access additional, affordable long-term services when they are in need. Whether it is getting more mental health professionals into our schools, opening more treatment beds to provide care to those who need it, ensuring access to mental health care in rural and high needs communities, and incentivizing careers in the mental health fields, we have to make bolstering these services a top priority in next year’s budget if we truly want ensure New Yorkers of all ages have the tools they need to rebuild and thrive.”*

*“Even before the pandemic, New York State had a mental health care workforce crisis when it comes to ensuring that New Yorkers have access to vital mental health services. Unfortunately, Covid has made that situation that more challenging for those who need help and treatment. That’s why I’m joining with my colleague Senator Sue Serino to urge the Governor to make funding for mental health services a top priority as she prepares next year’s state budget. It’s also why I’m sponsoring new legislation (S.7522) to expand statewide on an innovative BOCES pilot program to enable high school students the opportunity to learn about the direct care profession through work-based learning opportunities, job mentoring and curriculum-based training so we can help ease the labor shortage and provide more mental health care coverage to those who need it.” said Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-Glenville), Ranking Member of the Senate’s Mental Health Committee.*

The letter expands on an [earlier push from lawmakers](#) who called for funding for mental health services and the creation of additional stabilization centers in the state after a bipartisan visit to the Dutchess County Crisis Stabilization Center in October.

*“The Dutchess County Stabilization Center saves lives, and I am proud to have played a role in securing state funds to make opening it a reality in 2017,” Senator Serino continued. “Now, as the mental health needs of our neighbors evolve, we have to do more to build on its success and ensure that those in need of additional mental health services and supports have immediate access to them, and that is what this effort is about.”*

A full copy of the letter can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Residents who may be struggling with a mental health challenge should know that help is always available:

Dutchess County 24/7 Helpline - Call or TEXT 845-485-9700

Putnam County Crisis Intervention Hotline - 845-225-1222