

January 11th, 2017

Hon. Andrew Cuomo
Governor, New York State
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center (WNYCPC) in West Seneca is critical to the care and treatment of emotionally disturbed children and their families. The West Seneca facility serves our most vulnerable citizens who deserve and require special treatment in an environment that allows them and their families to feel safe and offers hope for their future. We are writing to urge you to reverse efforts by the Office of Mental Health to consolidate WNYCPC with the Buffalo Psychiatric Center (BPC) and to consider alternative options.

On virtually every metric, this institution excels and exceeds similar institutions in New York State. WNYCPC has the lowest 30 and 90 day readmission rates and continues to outperform all other state run facilities. The tranquil surroundings provide a much needed pause for both the children who are undergoing significant mental trauma and the families desperately trying to protect them.

The Buffalo Psychiatric Center stopped treating children more than 40 years ago when doctors determined that adolescents have specific and special needs when it comes to mental health treatment. That is why the WNY Children's Psychiatric Center was built. These needs have not changed and the decision of the Office of Mental Health must not be driven by money alone.

The Western New York Delegation, on behalf of the advocates with Save Our Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center, is requesting that a portion of the funds set aside for the rehabilitation of the Strozzi building at BPC be invested in major capital upgrades on the WNYCPC campus, allowing the facility to remain open. You will recall that \$8,000,000 had initially been included in WNYCPC's FY12-13's budget appropriation, but was swept when the BPC plan was initially proposed. WNYCPC has been notified by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations that the facility's accreditation is at risk due to numerous safety code issues. As you know, the loss of such accreditation would directly impact the State's ability to bill Medicaid and/or Medicare for services rendered at the facility. We ask that you please include an appropriation in the 2017-18 Executive Budget proposal of the necessary funding to complete the major capital upgrades at WNYCPC, an amount which advocates estimate to be approximately \$4 million based on the most recent survey conducted by the Joint Commission.

Since taking office, your administration has been a partner in protecting the rights of those that often do not have a voice. We are hopeful that a solution, supported by an overwhelming majority of clinicians, advocates, and families in Western New York, can be reached which sustains the WNYCPC in West Seneca.

Thank you for your continued leadership and collaboration.

Sincerely,



Patrick M. Gallivan
State Senate, 59th District



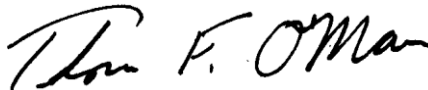
Michael H. Ranzenhofer
State Senate, 61st District




Robert G. Ort
State Senate, 62nd District



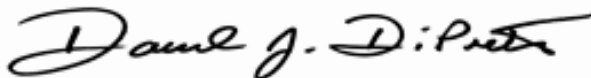
Timothy M. Kennedy
State Senate, 63rd District



Thomas F. O'Mara
State Senate, 58th District



Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes
State Assembly, 141st District



David J. DiPietro
State Assembly, 147th District




Raymond W. Walter
State Assembly, 146th District



Michael J. Norris
State Assembly, 144th District



Angelo J. Morinello
State Assembly, 145th District



Michael P. Kearns
State Assembly, 142nd District



Catharine M. Young
State Senate, 57th District



Rich Funke
State Senate, 55th District



Christopher L. Jacobs
State Senate, 60th District



Frederick J. Akshar II
State Senate, 52nd District



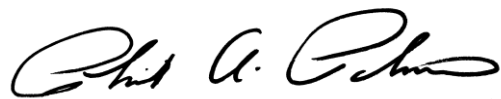
Robin Schimminger
State Assembly, 140th District



Joseph M. Giglio
State Assembly, 148th District



Stephen Hawley
State Assembly, 139th District



Philip A. Palmesano
State Assembly, 132nd District



Robert C. Oaks
State Assembly, 130th District