



New York State  
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Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor  
Executive Chamber, NYS Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

RE: S.1765-A/A.117-C

Dear Governor Hochul:

I am writing on behalf of PEF's 50,000 members encouraging you to sign the above referenced piece of legislation into law. This bill is critically important to the transparency of executive agencies that you have promised, as well as helping to improve the quality of services to some of New York's most vulnerable citizens.

The bill, authored by Assemblymember Aileen Gunter and Senator John Mannion, would require a report to be submitted to the Legislature one year prior to the closure of any Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) or Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) facility or institution. In addition, these quarterly reports would need to provide the budgeted staffing level and the current staffing level on a statewide and regional level, the number of vacancies, the actions taken to recruit new employees to fill vacant positions and waiting lists for the services which would be reduced by any closures.

We are seeing an alarming number of state-operated group home closures and they are negatively impacting clients, families, and communities across the state. Most of these closures stem from a lack of staff – a situation that could have been addressed earlier if the agency had taken the appropriate steps to recruit and/or retain staff. This bill would make any future decisions on closure much more transparent and help ensure that appropriate measures are taken which are in the best interests of both the consumers and the hard-working women and men who care for them.

Again, I strongly encourage you to sign S.1765-A/A.177-C into law as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Wayne Spence  
President