



## Funding for Mental Health, Developmental Disability and Addiction Programs

Dear Legislator:

As a constituent and a state employee represented by the Public Employees Federation (PEF), I write to you asking for your assistance with increasing state support for programs at agencies including the Office of Mental Health (OMH), The Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS).

These state agencies have suffered annually from budget cuts, closures, consolidations and privatization over the last decade. The Governor's budget proposal begins to pivot away from the past reductions, but does not adequately address the neglect these agencies have faced for too many years. Now is the time to reinvest in these critical state services and "Fund Our Future."

A good start would be providing OPWDD with a \$45 million fund to develop an emergency staffing and facilities acquisition plan. Over 120 residences have closed over the last three years due to lack of staffing and the expiration of leases and other physical plant issues.

Also, \$50 million is needed to reopen previously closed beds at various OMH facilities. The Governor has proposed \$15 million to open 150 inpatient psychiatric beds and \$18 million to expand state-operated inpatient capacity. This is a good start, but more needs to be done. An additional \$50 million should be directed more inpatient beds, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, hire more Intensive Case Managers (ICMs), increased capacity for on-site diagnosis and treatment at state facilities and better collaboration between OMH and OASAS for those with co-occurring disorders.

As my elected representative, I kindly ask that you work with the leadership in your house to stop the privatization of vital state agency programs and begin the process of reinvesting in the state services so many New Yorkers need. Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this very important issue.

Sincerely,

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