



## ADVOCACY UPDATE!

Our Issues. Our voices.

April 29, 2021

### Legislative Opposition to Proposed OPWDD Cuts and Call to Action!

State Lawmakers submitted a [letter](#) to the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) calling for a delay in the proposed cuts set to take effect May 1. The letter was spearheaded by Senator Mannion, and received significant legislative support and coverage in New York State of Politics yesterday. The Arc New York, as part of New York Disability Advocates (NYDA), has worked closely with Senator Mannion to help inform this letter and his support for other issues affecting the I/DD community. NYDA also released [comments](#) last week strongly rejecting the proposed cuts.

The proposed cuts will have significant impacts on individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) if implemented and would result in a \$238 million annualized cut to the system. The most egregious cuts slash reimbursement to voluntary providers by 50% whenever individuals with I/DD leave to spend time with family or are admitted to the hospital for care. The proposal also imposes an annual “cap” of 96 days of therapeutic leave, after which reimbursement would be reduced to zero, and eliminates the occupancy adjustment resulting from vacancies.

These cuts are looming mere days away. You can send a letter specifically opposing cuts to therapeutic leave days to Governor Cuomo and your state legislator through our online campaign [here](#).

You can also send a letter to Governor Cuomo, your state legislator, and OPWDD Commissioner Kastner to protest all the proposed cuts to IRA/ICF occupancy and vacancy rates [here](#).

The Arc New York and AHRC Suffolk will continue to advocate against these reductions with partners, stakeholders, families and individuals we support.

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE ACTION NOW!](#)

### Assemblyman Santabarbara Hosts Virtual Autism Action Day Tonight!

Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, a longtime Champion for New Yorkers with I/DD, parent, and Chair of the Assembly Subcommittee on Autism Spectrum Disorders is hosting a [virtual Autism Action Day](#) tonight at 6 PM.

The Arc New York has participated in past Autism Action days in person, and created a video for this year’s virtual event, featuring self-advocates from around the state. You can view the video [here](#), and join the event live on [Assemblyman Santabarbara’s facebook page](#). A recording will also be available [here](#) for viewing following the event. We encourage you to tune in and be part of Autism Action!



**Autism Action Day**

**Hosted by:**  
Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara,  
Chair of the Assembly Subcommittee  
on Autism Spectrum Disorders

**Where:**  
Proctors'  
OSM Government Channel  
1301 on Spectrum  
openstagemedia.org  
facebook.com/AsmSantabarbara

**When:**  
Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
6 p.m.

### Federal Call to Action: #MedicaidCantWait

The Arc of the United States launched a grassroots campaign, [#MedicaidCantWait](#). We encourage you to participate and share on social media.

For years, Medicaid, the service system that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families rely on has needed an update. People are stuck on waiting lists, the direct care workforce is underpaid, and too often, unpaid family caregivers are filling in the gaps in service.

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified these problems and exposed the cracks and gaps in the care infrastructure when it comes to supporting people with disabilities and their families. Tell Congress to support the Administration’s historic proposed investment in disability services as part of our COVID-19 economic recovery.

Congress must follow President Biden’s lead and fund \$400 billion for the Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) system to expand access to HCBS, increase wages for the direct care workforce, and create more of these jobs.

Tell Congress we need:

- A \$400 billion investment to fund expanded access to Medicaid HCBS to people with disabilities on waiting lists and address the direct care workforce crisis, including raising wages.
- A national paid leave program to ensure that people with disabilities, family caregivers, and direct care workers don’t have to choose between their own health, the health of their families, and their livelihood.
- Improvements to Supplemental Security Income benefits and asset limits to lift people out of poverty.

[Take action today!](#)