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Serving Children and Adults with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities for over 70 Years

March 18, 2022

PAUL H. TORRES
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Individuals, Families, and AHRC Suffolk Team Members:

JOHN MCGUIGAN
Chief Operating Officer

In the last week, our agency has made meaningful efforts in terms of advocacy on behalf of our programs and staff. Yesterday we hosted a legislative breakfast for some of our local representatives. In attendance were State Senator Phil Boyle, State Assemblyman Steve Stern, Suffolk County Legislator Anthony Piccirillo, and legislative aides from both Councilman James O'Connor's and County Legislator Trish Bergin's offices.

CHRISTOPHER VEROS
Chief Financial Officer

OFFICERS

JOHN SMITH
President

DEBORAH PFLIEGER
Treasurer

The breakfast was similarly significant to our historic visit from OPWDD's Commissioner Kerri Neifeld last Friday. AHRC Suffolk should not be the County's best kept secret. We can be very proud of the work we have done historically and especially now, at hopefully the back end of a pandemic in which we demonstrated our resiliency, our tenacity, our commitment to championing the children, individuals and families of our community.

DIRECTORS

Alden B. Kaplan

James P. O'Connor

Brian O'Reilly

As part of the New York State budget process, we can feel optimistic and hopeful that Governor Kathy Hochul has not only shined a spotlight on our services and the decade of underinvestment in essential services like ours, but that she backed up that commitment in a proposed budget that includes a 5.4% Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA), bonuses, a tax credit and an investment in professionalizing/credentialing our field.

In a recent turn of events, the New York Legislature proposed a bipartisan amendment to the State budget to replace most of the above items with an 11% COLA for our field. This would represent an unprecedented increase in investment in our agency and our workforce that would go a long way towards making up for 10 years of neglect. At yesterday's breakfast we advocated with our officials for the 11% COLA and I'm pleased to say that the feedback we received was both very positive and very optimistic.

Our efforts are not finished and a lot can happen in the next two weeks leading up to the April 1st vote. **We need your help in advocating for our staff!** Please use this **LINK** to quickly and easily urge your legislators and governor to support this proposal as part of the final budget agreement!

As we continue to celebrate both Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) and Women's History Month, please be sure you're following us on our social media platforms to see inspiring and fun posts on females in leadership and ways we are celebrating DDAM!

Stay well, stay safe and thank you for all you do,



Paul H. Torres
Chief Executive Officer

