

News from the Home Care Association Of New York State



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New York's Top Legislative Leaders Address Home Health Care Advocates Rallying Against \$100 Million in Proposed State Budget Cuts

High-ranking elected leaders today voiced their support for home health care during the Home Care Association of New York's (HCA) Legislative Advocacy Day in Albany.

Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Health Committee Chairman Richard Gottfried, Senate Health Committee Chairman Kemp Hannon and Senate Aging Committee Chairman Martin Golden all addressed a record turnout of home health care advocates opposing the more than \$100 million in proposed 2008-09 Executive Budget cuts – the deepest cuts in recent memory.

Assembly Speaker Silver said: "I understand your being confused since we know that Governor Spitzer has always indicated his support for community-based health care."

Speaker Silver added: "I will promise you that I and my Assembly colleagues will do everything that we can to mitigate the pain that you have found in the Executive Budget. Believe me, we know you score no points forcing people to receive treatment in a facility rather than in the comfort of their own homes."

Senate Majority Leader Bruno said: "Everybody talks about getting people out of the hospital to recover in their homes, right? And yet, just saying it doesn't get it done. You need the resources, you need the system. My commitment on behalf of my Conference is we're going to partner with you and talk with you. You help us fix what the Governor is breaking in his budget."

Assembly Health Committee Chairman Gottfried said: "We will, on the Assembly side, buy back as much of the health cuts that are in the budget as we can find money for, and that will certainly include the home care sector, which we understand is proportionately the hardest hit sector in the health part of the budget."

Senate Health Committee Chairman Hannon said: "We can keep people in institutions for a shorter period of time, we can cut the length of stay in hospitals. But you know, when they do get out of the hospital, or when they are discharged from rehab in the nursing home, it doesn't mean the human body gets better quicker. Somebody has to take care of those folks. And I know that's you. And I know you can't do it if you can't pay your staff, if you can't run your operation."

Senate Aging Committee Chairman Golden said: "Now if we are really interested in our seniors and those in need, what better, more compassionate way, and financially sound way, of taking care of those needs than taking care of them in their own homes. We are at a loss as to why you want to reduce home care. If you want to bring down costs across the state in Medicaid, you want to be able to increase home care and keep moms, dads, brothers, sisters, our children ... at home where they have a better quality of life. It's more compassionate, it gives them the quality of life that they deserve, and it's the right thing to do."

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