



GOVERNOR PATERSON'S STATE OF THE STATE FOCUSED ON ETHICS AND FINANCE

Governor David Paterson gave his second State of the State Address on January 6, 2010. His address focused on improving the state's fiscal condition and enacting ethics reform. His address did not provide any insight into the proposals affecting people with disabilities and their families that will be contained in his Executive Budget, which is to be released on January 19th. But, a statement accompanying the State of the State and touting the Governor's accomplishments, stated: "Through the governor's leadership, the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities developed the Employment First agenda and launched its 'Works for Me' initiative. Employment First promotes the employment of individuals who have devel-

opmental disabilities as a workforce strategy rather than a service strategy. Like any employee, a person who has a developmental disability can be productive, given appropriate training and support."

The Governor's State of the State included:

- Fiscal recovery plan – The Governor says the plan would achieve structural balance, which is "the only way to budget responsibly and avoid unexpected cuts in essential services – such as schools, hospitals and mass transit – in times of economic distress." The recovery plan also includes a proposed spending cap.
- Fiscal reform – including cutting bureaucracy, merging agencies to improve efficiency and save money, public tracking of performance, and a long-term fiscal planning strategy.
- Ethics reform – The Reform Albany Act would offer a comprehensive reform package including campaign finance reform, term limits for statewide offices, Independent Ethics Commission, replacing the Sole Trustee of the Common Retirement Fund with a five-member board and ending "pay to play."
- Accountability and transparency – EmpireStat, a new program to ensure better accountability and transparency of state operations, would focus on areas including economic development/jobs, health care/vulnerable youth, public safety, and road safety. In health care, EmpireStat would address complaints against physicians, Medicaid fraud and abuse, monitoring immunization of youth, and prevention of lead poisoning in young children.
- Economic development and job creation – Several initiatives were mentioned such as a Families First Initiative to "help connect newly vulnerable citizens with available services which they may not be aware of"; replacing the Empire Zone program with the Excelsior Jobs Program; New York Insurance Exchange (NYIE) to provide tax benefits to bring buyers and sellers of complex commercial insurance together, similar to Lloyd's of London; promoting minority and women-owned business enterprises as well as other initiatives.

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The Governor discussed the troubled State of New York's economy and the decisions that he and the Legislature will face in the months ahead. Legislators will need to close a more than \$6 billion deficit for state fiscal year 2010-2011. We will provide you with further information once the Executive Budget Proposal is released on January 19, 2010.

CP of NYS, NYSARC and the Alliance of Long Island MRDD Agencies will be holding a joint Albany Advocacy Day on Monday, March 1, 2010. Please mark your calendars and plan on participating in the Albany Advocacy Day on March 1st.

SENATOR MORAHAN NAMED CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

The New York State Senate made several changes to committee chairmanships for 2010. Senate Democratic Conference Leader John Sampson (D-Brooklyn) appointed two Republican Senators as committee chairs: Senator Thomas Morahan (R-New City) as Chair of the Committee on Mental Health and Hygiene; and Senator George Maziarz (R-Newfane) as Chair of the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications. Senators Maziarz and Morahan previously chaired their respective committees when the Republicans were in the Senate Majority.

Senator Morahan replaces Senator Shirley Huntley (D-Queens), who has been appointed as Deputy Majority Leader of Federal/State Relations and Chair of the Committee on Cities. Senator Daniel Squadron (D-New York City) was appointed as Chair of the Committee on Social Services. Senator Squadron replaces Senator Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn), who was previously the chair of two committees. Senator Montgomery will continue as Chair of the Committee on Children and Families.

On behalf of the people with disabilities and their families that we serve, we congratulate Senator Morahan and welcome him back as our Committee Chair as well as thank Senator Huntley for her service.

JANUARY 7TH FAMILY ADVOCACY DAY

CP of NYS Affiliates joined their colleague agencies to urge the Legislature to protect people with disabilities. From Brooklyn to Batavia and Malone to Montauk, family members, staff and self-advocates met with their State representatives across New York State on January 7th in an attempt to convince state leaders not to cut any more funds from OMRDD. Family Advocacy Day had a simple message for legislators: Please protect the systems and services in place for people with developmental disabilities. Families met with legislators to tell them not to make any more

cuts in services funded by the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD). Thomas J. Caserta, a parent as well as CP of NYS and Niagara CP Board Member, said "We hope that this day will help legislators to better understand how critically important OMRDD Services are to their constituents."

Most of the Affiliates that we heard from met directly with their legislators and felt that Family Advocacy Day was very successful. A number of Affiliates had media coverage which is available on the CP of NYS website.

Family Advocacy Day was part of the ongoing effort by all of the associations to make legislators aware of and secure their support for OMRDD funding and services for people with disabilities and their families throughout New York State. Thank you to all Affiliates who participated in Family Advocacy Day!

SENATE HEARING ON REFORMING MEDICAID – INVESTIGATING CURRENT STRATEGIES TARGETING WASTE, FRAUD AND ABUSE

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Investigations and Government Operations chaired by Senator Craig Johnson (D-Nassau) held a hearing January 7 on the operations of the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General. Inspector General James Sheehan presented to the committee and was extensively questioned on issues that have been of great concern to providers such as the current method of extrapolation, auditor interpretation of regulations, submitted and withdrawn draft and final reports and the atmosphere of fear amongst providers.

Following Mr. Sheehan's testimony several provider associations presented testimony about the issues above. Senator Johnson was well versed in the issues of the providers and asked many questions of those testifying.

Since we believe many Affiliates will be interested in the exchange that took place with Mr. Sheehan, we will let you know when the hearing has been posted to the NYS Senate website.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO EARLY INTERVENTION REGULATIONS

A notice of proposed rulemaking for the New York State Early Intervention Program was published in the New York State Register on Wednesday, January 6, 2010. According to the Department of Health, revisions to 10 NYCRR 69-4 are needed to conform to federal and State statutory changes enacted since promulgation of final regulations and improve the State's capacity to ensure that early intervention

services are delivered in a cost-effective manner, improve program quality and accountability, assure adequate capacity to deliver early intervention services to eligible children and their families, and ensure that only those children whose development is compromised are eligible to participate in the program.

The New York State Register can be accessed in a fully searchable on-line format, and as a pdf, at the Department of State website at the following URL:<http://www.dos.state.ny.us/info/register/2010/jan6/pdfs/rules.pdf>. Since the entire set of proposed regulations exceeds 2,000 words, a summary is published in the State Register. The complete set can be obtained at the Department of Health website at the following URL: http://www.nyhealth.gov/nysdoh/phforum/proposed_rulemaking/.

In addition, the Department will be holding public hearings to receive public comment on the notice of proposed rulemaking on the following dates. Please note that the dates, times and locations of the hearings have changed from those listed in the State Register.

- Friday, Feb. 5, 2010, 10:00 A.M., Best Western Sovereign Hotel, 1228 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203
- Monday Feb. 8, 2010, 10:00 A.M., Hotel Pennsylvania, 401 Seventh Ave., New York NY 10001
- Tuesday Feb. 16, 2010 11:00 A.M., Doubletree Hotel, 1111 Jefferson Road, Rochester NY 14623

To register to attend the public hearing, including to provide public comment, please send an e-mail to: bei@health.state.ny.us.

VESID SEEKS HELP IN DEVELOPMENT OF STATE PLAN FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The State of New York is developing the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services for Federal Fiscal Year 2011. Three public meetings have been scheduled to gather recommendations from individuals with disabilities, their families, advocates and service providers on how to improve vocational rehabilitation and supported employment services. The sites and dates of the meetings are:

Albany

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 – 2:00 to 4:00 PM
Albany Public Library Main Branch, Large Auditorium,
161 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12205

New York City

January 27, 2010 – 2:00 to 4:00 PM
Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, between 68th Street and

Lexington, Room E1203 NY, NY 10065 (wheelchair accessible entrance is in North Building; take elevator to the 3rd Floor which will lead you to the East Building crosswalk)

Buffalo

February 26, 2010 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Parent Network of Western New York, 1000 Main Street,
Buffalo, NY 14202

Recommendations may also be submitted by mail or electronically. Individual written comments should be submitted to the New York State Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), VR Policy and Partnerships Unit-Room 1603 (OCP), NYS Education Department, Albany, NY 12234. Electronic submissions should be sent to VRpolicy@mail.nysed.gov. The public comment period extends from January 13, 2010 through March 1, 2010.

For more information contact (VESID) at www.vesid.nysed.gov.

FREE TRAININGS SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR AUTISM AND RELATED DISORDERS

The Center for Autism and Related Disorders at SUNY Albany has announced a series of trainings in various locations throughout New York State on the development of social skills in children and youth with autism spectrum disorders. These seminars are offered AT NO COST to participants living within New York State through a grant from the New York State Education Department. However, due to space limitations, pre-registration is required.

Each session will address the following:

8:30 – 11:30am: Seminar 1 – identifying social differences, impact on functioning, useful assessment tools

11:30 am – 12:30 pm: Lunch (on your own)

12:30 – 3:30 pm: Seminar 2 – skills to teach at different developmental levels, strategies to teach skills in various settings

Dates and locations are as follows:

Tuesday, January 26, 2010, The Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, 40 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie

Thursday, February 4, 2010, Westchester Institute for Human Development Auditorium, Cedarwood Hall, Valhalla

Tuesday, February 23, 2010, The Holiday Inn, 5206 State Highway 23, Oneonta

Thursday, February 25, 2010, The Holiday Inn , 222 South Cayuga Street, Ithaca

Tuesday, March 2, 2010, The Holiday Inn Express, Route 9, Latham

Monday, March 8, 2010, The Queensbury Hotel, 88 Ridge Street, Glens Falls

Monday, March 15, 2010, The West Side Ballroom, 253 New York Road, Plattsburgh

Tuesday, March 16, 2010, The High Peaks Resort, 2384 Saranac Ave, Lake Placid

For access to the flyer, with a more detailed description and the required registration form, go to:

http://www.albany.edu/psy/autism/PDPS_schedule.htm.

EARLY INTERVENTION PARTNERS TRAINING PROJECT

The NYS Department of Health's Bureau of Early Intervention and the Family Initiative Coordination Services Project will be sponsoring an Early Intervention Partners Training Project in Batavia this spring. This project is designed specifically for parents of infants and toddlers with special needs who are currently receiving early intervention services and for parent members of the Local Early Intervention Coordinating Council (LEICC) and its committees.

The Early Intervention Partners Training Project is a leadership-training program offering parents of young children with special needs an opportunity to enhance their advocacy and leadership skills. Parents can discuss and share strategies that will support them in their efforts to become more effective partners with professionals and early intervention policymakers. This program also is designed to assist parent members in becoming more effective participants on their LEICC.

The Early Intervention Partners Training Project is scheduled to meet in Batavia on March 20, April 16 -17, and May 14 -15, 2010. The sessions in April and May include an optional overnight stay to provide parents the opportunity to network with other parents of children with special needs. The program is offered free of charge and available to parents in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties.

For more details and an application packet, contact Margaret Sampson at (631) 205-0502 or Jacqueline Martello at (518) 473-7016.

PEPSI WILL USE SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO AWARD GRANTS, GENERATE AWARENESS

Pepsi has launched an interesting social media campaign, reportedly in place of its annual Super Bowl ad blitz. The campaign is centered around a new grants program that Pepsi says will award millions of dollars in funding to worthy projects. The company will award grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$250,000 in six broad categories: health, neighborhoods, education, arts and culture, environment and food and shelter.

The purpose of the campaign is to generate buzz on social media sites. Organizations are invited to start submitting grant requests on January 13. Once you submit the application, you must get people to go to the campaign website to vote for your project. Voting begins February 1st. Refresh Grants, as the company is calling them, will be awarded based on the idea which receives the greatest number of votes. To learn more about the project or to apply for a grant, visit the following link <http://www.refresheverything.com/>.

SAVE THE DATE

The 2010 CP of NYS Annual Conference, "*Real people – Realizing potential*," will be held **October 25-27, 2010** at The Desmond Hotel & Conference Center in Albany, NY.