

January 11th, 2017

Hon. Andrew Cuomo  
Governor, New York State  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center (WNYCPC) in West Seneca is critical to the care and treatment of emotionally disturbed children and their families. The West Seneca facility serves our most vulnerable citizens who deserve and require special treatment in an environment that allows them and their families to feel safe and offers hope for their future. We are writing to urge you to reverse efforts by the Office of Mental Health to consolidate WNYCPC with the Buffalo Psychiatric Center (BPC) and to consider alternative options.

On virtually every metric, this institution excels and exceeds similar institutions in New York State. WNYCPC has the lowest 30 and 90 day readmission rates and continues to outperform all other state run facilities. The tranquil surroundings provide a much needed pause for both the children who are undergoing significant mental trauma and the families desperately trying to protect them.

The Buffalo Psychiatric Center stopped treating children more than 40 years ago when doctors determined that adolescents have specific and special needs when it comes to mental health treatment. That is why the WNY Children's Psychiatric Center was built. These needs have not changed and the decision of the Office of Mental Health must not be driven by money alone.

The Western New York Delegation, on behalf of the advocates with Save Our Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center, is requesting that a portion of the funds set aside for the rehabilitation of the Strozzi building at BPC be invested in major capital upgrades on the WNYCPC campus, allowing the facility to remain open. You will recall that \$8,000,000 had initially been included in WNYCPC's FY12-13's budget appropriation, but was swept when the BPC plan was initially proposed. WNYCPC has been notified by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations that the facility's accreditation is at risk due to numerous safety code issues. As you know, the loss of such accreditation would directly impact the State's ability to bill Medicaid and/or Medicare for services rendered at the facility. We ask that you please include an appropriation in the 2017-18 Executive Budget proposal of the necessary funding to complete the major capital upgrades at WNYCPC, an amount which advocates estimate to be approximately \$4 million based on the most recent survey conducted by the Joint Commission.

Since taking office, your administration has been a partner in protecting the rights of those that often do not have a voice. We are hopeful that a solution, supported by an overwhelming majority of clinicians, advocates, and families in Western New York, can be reached which sustains the WNYCPC in West Seneca.

Thank you for your continued leadership and collaboration.

Sincerely,



Patrick M. Gallivan  
State Senate, 59<sup>th</sup> District



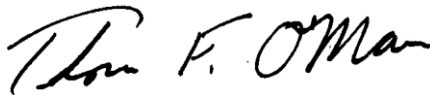
Michael H. Ranzenhofer  
State Senate, 61<sup>st</sup> District



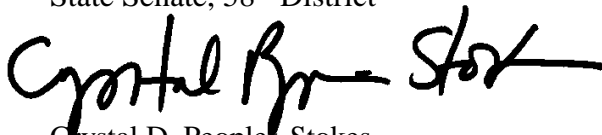
Robert G. Ort  
State Senate, 62<sup>nd</sup> District



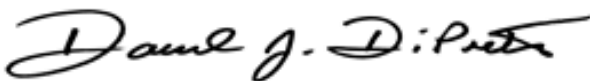
Timothy M. Kennedy  
State Senate, 63<sup>rd</sup> District



Thomas F. O'Mara  
State Senate, 58<sup>th</sup> District



Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes  
State Assembly, 141<sup>st</sup> District



David J. DiPietro  
State Assembly, 147<sup>th</sup> District



Raymond W. Walter  
State Assembly, 146<sup>th</sup> District



Michael J. Norris  
State Assembly, 144<sup>th</sup> District



Angelo J. Morinello  
State Assembly, 145<sup>th</sup> District



Michael P. Kearns  
State Assembly, 142<sup>nd</sup> District



Catharine M. Young  
State Senate, 57<sup>th</sup> District



Rich Funke  
State Senate, 55<sup>th</sup> District



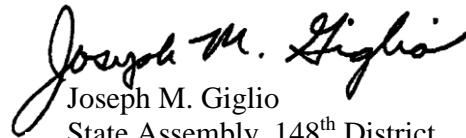
Christopher L. Jacobs  
State Senate, 60<sup>th</sup> District



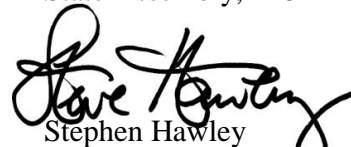
Frederick J. Akshar II  
State Senate, 52<sup>nd</sup> District



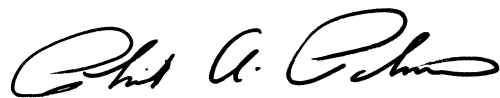
Robin Schimminger  
State Assembly, 140<sup>th</sup> District



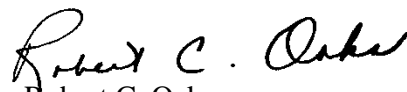
Joseph M. Giglio  
State Assembly, 148<sup>th</sup> District



Stephen Hawley  
State Assembly, 139<sup>th</sup> District



Philip A. Palmesano  
State Assembly, 132<sup>nd</sup> District



Robert C. Oaks  
State Assembly, 130<sup>th</sup> District