



ACTION ALERT

120 West 57 Street New York, NY 10019 Phone 212 586-4555 Fax 212 541-6183

A non-profit tax-exempt organization representing New York City's community-based mental health sector.

COLA - DEPENDS ON YOU!

- **We need to secure our base. *The Assembly will be drafting its budget bill next week!!* We must make sure that a COLA and Medicaid rate increase is written into the Assembly's one-house budget which is expected to pass no later than March 9.**
- **PLEASE contact your Assembly Members and make the case for a COLA!! The window of opportunity is narrow.**
- **Write, FAX and call your Assembly Members. Use these talking points.**

COLA TALKING POINTS

- *The last COLA was in 1994-95 and lasted for only one quarter before being rescinded. Effectively, cost of living in the voluntary sector has been flat since 1986.*
- *Medicaid funded agencies have not received an increase since 1990.*
- *Turnover rates at community mental health providers have risen upwards of 27% in some cases.*
- *Competition for staff now includes entry level positions at food service establishments. Staff morale is low. Inexperienced staff and lack of continuity hurts clients.*
- *Employees performing identical services at State operational facilities have enjoyed inflation pacing increases. Salaries average \$10,000 more per year in the State system.*
- *The state sector received a 3.5% COLA in last year's budget and will receive ANOTHER 3.5% in this year's budget to begin in October 1998.*
- *Existence of voluntary agencies providing quality care is in jeopardy.*

NYC members of Assembly

Wed-Feb 25,1998

Peter J. Abbate, Jr. NY State Assembly	(518) 455-3053 - Office (518) 455-5524 - FAX (718) 236-1764 - 18th Av.Of (718) 232-9565 - 11th Av.Of
Jeffrion L. Aubry NY State Assembly	(518) 457-4561 - Office (518) 455-4565 - FAX (718) 457-3615 - Dist.Of (718) 457-3640 - DistOfFax
Samuel B. Bea, Jr. NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4800 - Office (518) 455-5103 - FAX (718) 324-0664 - Dist.Ofc. (718) 324-0983 - Dist.Fax
William F. Boyland NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4466 - Office (518) 455-3894 - FAX (718) 498-8681 - Dist.Ofc (718) 498-8807 - Dist.Fax
James F. Brennan NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5377 - Office (518) 455-5592 - FAX (718) 788-7221 - 7thAve. (718) 965-9378 - 7thAveFax (718) 940-0641 - Cortelyou
Denis J. Butler NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5014 - Office (518) 455-4044 - FAX (718) 932-4052 - Dist.Ofc (718) 932-4052 - Dist.Fax
Ann Margaret E. Carrozza NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5425 - Office (518) 455-4648 - FAX
Barbara M. Clark NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4711 - Office (518) 455-3740 - FAX (718) 492-2333 - Dist. Ofc. (718) 464-7128 - Dist. Fax
Adele Cohen NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4811 - Office
William Colton NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5828 - Office (518) 455-5706 - FAX (718) 236-1598 - Dist. Off. (718) 236-6507 - Dist. Fax
Elizabeth A. Connelly NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4677 - Office (518) 455-5946 - FAX (718) 494-3200 - Dist. Off. (718) 983-5620 - Dist. Fax
Vivian E. Cook NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4203 - Office (518) 455-3806 - FAX (718) 322-3975 - Dist. Off. (718) 322-4085 - Dist. Fax

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Joseph Crowley NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4755 - Office (518) 455-5032 - FAX (718) 671-3185 - Dist. Off. (718) 651-3027 - Dist. Fax
Gloria Davis NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5272 - Office (518) 455-5925 - FAX (718) 588-3119 - Dist. Off. (718) 588-3317 - Dist. Fax
Nelson A. Denis NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4781 - Office (518) 455-5925 - FAX (212) 828-1058 - Dist. Off. (212) 828-1064 - Dist. Fax
Jeffrey Dinowitz NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5965 - Office (518) 455-4437 - FAX (718) 796-5345 - Dist. Off. (718) 796-0694 - Dist. Fax
Adriano Espaillat NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5807 - Office (518) 455-4908 - FAX (212) 544-2278 - Dist.Off. (212) 544-2252 - Dist. Fax
Herman D. Farrell, Jr. (Denny) NYS Assembly Ways & Means Comm.	(518) 455-5491 - Office (518) 455-5776 - FAX (212) 234-1430 - Powell Jr. (212) 234-1868 - Powell Fax (212) 312-1441 - Broadway (212) 312-1445 - Bdway Fax
Daniel Feldman NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5214 - Office (518) 455-5738 - FAX (718) 375-0770 - Dist. Off. (718) 376-8028 - Dist. Fax
Anthony J. Genovesi NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5211 - Office (718) 968-2770 - Dist. Off. (718) 968-2773 - Dist. Fax
Deborah Glick NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4841 - Office (518) 455-4649 - FAX (212) 674-5153 - Dist. Off. (212) 674-5530 - Other
Richard N. Gottfried (Dick) NYS Assembly	(518) 455-4941 - Office (518) 455-5939 - FAX (212) 312-1492 - Dist. Off. (212) 312-1494 - Dist. Fax
Alexander Grannis (Pete) NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5676 - Office (518) 455-5282 - FAX (212) 860-4906 - Dist. Off. (212) 996-3046 - Dist. Fax

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Roger L. Green NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5325 - Office (518) 455-3684 - FAX (718) 596-0100 - Dist. Off. (718) 834-0865 - Dist. Fax
Aurelia Greene NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5671 - Office (518) 455-5461 - FAX (718) 538-2000 - Dist. Off. (718) 538-3310 - Other
Edward Griffith NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5912 - Office (518) 455-3891 - FAX (212) 312-1435 - Dist. Off. (212) 312-1436 - Other
Dov Hikind NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5721 - Office (518) 455-5948 - FAX (718) 853-9616 - Dist. Off. (718) 436-5734 - Dist. Fax
Rhoda S. Jacobs NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5385 - Office (518) 455-3881 - FAX (718) 421-4396 - Dist. Fax (718) 434-0446 - Dist. Off. (212) 385-6634 - City Hall
Melinda Katz NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4926 - Office (518) 455-5173 - FAX (718) 263-5595 - Dist. Off. (718) 263-5688 - Dist. Fax
Stephen B. Kaufman NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5296 - Office (518) 455-4641 - FAX (718) 320-2220 - Dreiser (718) 829-7452 - Bruckner (718) 597-5037 - Dist. Fax
Jeffrey Klein NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5844 - Office (518) 455-5596 - FAX (718) 409-0109 - Dist. Off. (718) 409-0431 - Dist. Fax
Ivan C. Lafayette NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4545 - Office (518) 455-4547 - FAX (718) 457-0384 - Dist. Off. (718) 335-8254 - Dist. Fax
Joseph R. Lentol NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4477 - Office (518) 455-4599 - FAX (718) 383-7474 - Dist. Off. (718) 383-1576 - Other
Vito Lopez NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5537 - Office (518) 455-5789 - FAX (718) 963-7029 - Dist. Off. (718) 963-6942 - Dist. Fax

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Nettie Mayersohn NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4404 - Office (518) 455-5408 - FAX (718) 463-1942 - Dist. Off. (718) 358-1979 - Dist. Fax
Brian M. McLaughlin NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5172 - Office (518) 455-5479 - FAX (718) 762-6575 - Dist. Off. (718) 762-0917 - Dist. Fax
Joan L. Millman NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5426 - Office (718) 246-4889 - Dist. Off. (718) 246-4895 - Dist. Fax
Catherine T. Nolan NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4851 - Office (518) 455-3847 - FAX (718) 456-9492 - Woodward A (718) 417-4982 - Woodward A (718) 784-3194 - 47th St.
Clarence Norman, Jr. NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5262 - Office (518) 455-5768 - FAX (718) 756-1776 - Dist. Off. (718) 778-3010 - Dist. Fax
Felix Ortiz NY State Assembly	(518) 455-3821 - Office (518) 455-3828 - Fax (718) 492-6334 - Dist.Off. (718) 492-6435 - Dist.Fax
Nick N. Perry NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5478 - FAX
Audrey I. Pheffer NY State Assembly	(518) 455-4292 - Office (518) 455-4723 - FAX (718) 945-9550 - Rockaway (718) 945-9549 - Rock. Fax (718) 641-8755 - Crossbay
Roberto Ramirez NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5414 - Office (518) 455-5322 - FAX (718) 933-2204 - Dist. Off. (718) 933-2535 - Dist. Fax
John Ravitz NY State Assembly Member	(212) 861-9061 - Office (518) 455-4629 - FAX (212) 794-1242 - Home (518) 455-4794 - Albany
Peter M. Rivera NY State Assembly	(518) 455-5102 - Office (518) 455-3693 - FAX (718) 931-2620 - Dist. Off. (718) 931-2915 - Dist. Fax

<p>Steven Sanders NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5506 - Office (518) 455-4801 - FAX (212) 979-9696 - Dist. Ofc. (212) 979-0594 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>William Scarborough NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-4451 - Office (518) 455-5522 - FAX (718) 949-7235 - Dist. Off. (718) 949-7235 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>Anthony S. Seminerio NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-4621 - Office (518) 455-5361 - FAX (718) 847-0770 - Jamaica (718) 366-6725 - Myrtle Ave (718) 366-6751 - Myrtle Fax</p>
<p>Sheldon Silver NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(212) 385-6680 - Dist. Off. (212) 312-1425 - Dist. Fax (518) 455-3791 - Office (518) 455-5459 - Fax (518) 455-3010xBasil - Press</p>
<p>Robert A. Stranieri NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-4495 - Office (518) 455-4501 - FAX (718) 667-0314 - Dist. Off. (718) 987-4593 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>Scott M. Stringer NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5802 - Office (518) 455-5015 - FAX (212) 873-6368 - Dist. Off. (212) 873-6520 - Dist. Fas</p>
<p>Edward C. Sullivan NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5603 - Office (518) 455-3812 - FAX (212) 866-3970 - Dist. Off. (212) 864-1095 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>Darryl C. Towns NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(718) 235-5627 - Dist. Off. (718) 235-5966 - Dist. Fax (518) 455-5821 - Office (518) 455-5591 - Fax</p>
<p>Albert Vann NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5474 - Office (518) 455-5857 - FAX (718) 919-0740 - Dist. Off. (718) 919-0744 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>Eric N. Vitaliano NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5716 - Office (518) 455-5970 - FAX (718) 761-5083 - Dist. Off. (718) 698-7578 - Dist. Fax</p>
<p>Helene E. Weinstein NY State Assembly</p>	<p>(518) 455-5462 - Office (518) 455-5752 - FAX (718) 648-4700 - Dist. Off. (718) 769-4846 - Dist. Fax</p>

NYC members of Assembly

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Mark Weprin
NY State Assembly

(518) 455-5806 - Office
(518) 455-5977 - FAX
(718) 428-7900 - Dist. Off.
(718) 428-8575 - Dist. Fax

Keith L. Wright
NY State Assembly

(518) 455-4793 - Office
(518) 455-3890 - FAX
(212) 866-5809 - Dist. Off.
(212) 864-1367 - Dist. Fax
