

**Memorializing The Governor & State Legislature To Allow Counties Formal Input On Conversions Of State Aid To Medicaid**

The Mental Health / Public Health / Residential Services Committee (Chairmen Busick and Roberti and Legislators Alfonso, McAfee, Robert Parete, Provenzano and Stoeckeler) offers the following:

WHEREAS, the NYS Office of Mental Health, the NYS Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities, and the NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services have a long history of converting direct State Aid for community-based programs to Medicaid reimbursements, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of these conversions is to reduce the direct State contribution for services by replacing State Aid with a federal and local Medicaid contribution, and

WHEREAS, State Aid allocations, particularly reinvestment funding, allow local governments a measure of discretion and control over the use of funding to address local planning priorities, and

WHEREAS, this measure of local control is completely eliminated when Medicaid reimbursements are substituted for State Aid, and

WHEREAS, reliance upon Medicaid reimbursements increases the potential vulnerability of the financing of our behavioral health services system due to uncertainty over the federal government's future financing of its share of Medicaid, and

WHEREAS, conversions to Medicaid reimbursements increase overhead costs for agencies due to the infrastructure required for billing and maintenance of medical records, and

WHEREAS, reliance upon Medicaid reimbursements ultimately exposes service provider agencies to Medicaid audit exceptions and potentially severe financial repayments, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Community Services Board has requested that the Ulster County Legislature memorialize the Governor and the State Legislature to empower local governments to have greater input in the decision-making process about all future conversions of State aid to Medicaid, and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health/Public Health/Residential Services Committee has reviewed said request with a majority of its members voting approval.

**Resolution No. 96 March 11, 2004**

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RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature hereby memorializes the Governor and the State Legislature to empower local governments in New York State to participate in the decision-making process for all future from State aid to Medicaid conversions affecting behavioral health programs, with the structure for said participation to be developed in collaboration with the NYS Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 32                      NOES: 0  
(Absent: Legislator Hathaway)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

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