

March 12, 2010

Honorable John L. Sampson
Democratic Conference Leader
409 LOB
Albany, New York 12247

Dear Conference Leader Sampson:

Re: Title XX

We, the members of the Senate Democratic Conference, would like to voice our strong opposition to a proposal in the SFY 2010-2011 Executive Budget that, if enacted, will have devastating consequences. The Governor's proposal will result in the total elimination of Title XX funding for discretionary programs and every county in New York State will suffer the loss of much-needed funding as a result of this change.

Currently, \$103 million in Title XX funds is allocated through the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. There are "mandated" services under Title XX which are required to be funded - Adult Protective Services and Domestic Violence programs. There are also "discretionary" services, which are up to the state whether or not to fund - senior centers and day care, for example, are discretionary services, not mandatory. Of the \$103 million, \$66 million is slated for Adult Protective Services /Domestic Violence Services (Chapter 53 of the Laws of 2009) and \$37 million is to be distributed to counties to fund programs at their discretion.

The Governor's budget eliminates all discretionary funds and moves the money over to the mandated services. That way the state saves other dollars it was using for Adult Protective Services and Domestic Violence programs. While these are worthy programs, it cannot be at the price of closing or crippling other important programs throughout New York State.

Every county in New York State uses Title XX funding for discretionary services. The counties listed below are just a few examples of the most devastating impacts that will result from this proposed change.

- New York City: \$25.2 million will be eliminated from the Department for the Aging (DFTA) which will result in the possible closure of up to 110 senior centers and the elimination of 5500 meals a day.

- Westchester County: \$1.7 million in Title XX funding will be eliminated, funding that the county uses for day care for low-income families.
- Nassau County: \$3 million in Title XX funding will be eliminated, including a \$600,000 cut to the Department of Senior Citizen Affairs.
- Erie County: \$707,926 in Title XX funding will be eliminated, including a \$171,427 cut for Senior Services Housing and Supportive Services (case management for seniors 60 years of age and older who are eligible for Title XX services), as well as a \$66,650 loss for meals on wheels.

Again, we are strongly opposed to this provision in the Governor's Executive Budget and request your immediate intervention to ensure that it is not included in the final enacted SFY 2010-2011 budget. A funding cut of this magnitude will have devastating consequences to the lives of hundreds of thousands of seniors, families and children throughout New York State.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rubén Díaz", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator Rubén Díaz, Chairman
New York State Senate Committee on Aging

cc: Senate Democratic Conference