

NASW-NYS Political Post

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Back In Black ... New York politics mirrored the partisan tone of Washington this week as negotiations on the Deficit Reduction Plan came to a close on Tuesday amidst much grumbling from the Republican Party. The measure, while deemed necessary by most, closes a \$1.6 billion deficit for the current fiscal year, was termed “gimmicky” by a number of good government groups for its creative shifting and sweeping of funds. Senate Republicans vocally opposed the measure, saying it “crafted by three Democrats from New York City – Gov. David A. Paterson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Smith – and that it unfairly targets upstate, ‘steals’ money intended for college students and drives up the costs of upstate companies getting low-cost electricity from the Power for Jobs program.” The Governor, however, defended the plan as “making hard choices that will send a signal to Washington that New York took responsible fiscal action and deserves a fair share of the federal stimulus package now being negotiated.” Two items of particular interest to NASW-NYS as it relates to the Deficit Reduction Plan are a reduction of new legislative programs and the rejection of a Timothy’s Law extender. The programming reduction will trim our original Veteran’s Mental Health Training Initiative allocation of \$250,000 to \$188,000; however, we are grateful it wasn’t cut completely and eager to resume planning of this vitally important program. The legislature’s rejection of an administrative proposal to fund the small business subsidy of Timothy’s Law through assessments to insurers, however, leaves us with much work to do in the coming legislative session regarding mental health parity in New York State.

Back in Albany ... Long time Senator Frank Padavan (R - Queens) finally learned he would be returning to Albany this week after a protracted battle for the 11th District Senate seat that ended Thursday after numerous recounts and a Supreme Court review.

Back in Business ... After months of working with the NY State Education Department, we are happy to report a recent decision by the Department’s Committee on the Professions (COP) regarding experience for licensure as an LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker). The decision authorizes the State Education Department to accept experience completed in an independently owned and operated setting for licensure as a licensed clinical social worker, provided such experience satisfies all other requirements set forth in section 74.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and is otherwise in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. For complete information on this issue please log onto <http://www.op.nysed.gov/swprivatepractice.htm> While we celebrate this accomplishment we assure you that we will continue to work with NYSED, the state legislature, and governor’s office to resolve the issues that remain. We urge you to review the information on this action in detail and contact the Chapter office should you have any questions about this decision via email: swlicensure@naswnys.org or call 800-724-6279.