



FRIDAY FOCUS

A NYSRA Member Service

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NYS Legislative Session Comes to a Close

State lawmakers came to the conclusion of an extended legislative session on Thursday, with some legislators stating that it was not without much negotiation. Some key pieces of legislation for the State that saw passage include legislation on sexual assault on college campuses, rent protections, property tax reform and an education reform package. Some bills that did not pass the legislature include the minimum wage bill, education investment tax credit and a bill that would take away pensions from officials convicted on corruption charges.

[Click here](#) to reach a more detailed analysis of the final budget agreement from Malkin & Ross, NYSRA's lobby firm.

Capital Tonight Talk Minimum Wage Issue

As reported in last week's issue of the [Friday Focus](#), NYSRA along with other statewide associations have combined our advocacy efforts on the minimum wage issue. Appearing this week on Time Warner Cable's [Capital Tonight](#) program to discuss the issue was [NYSARC's Executive Director Steven Kroll](#) and Susan Constantino, President & CEO of CP of NYS, who did a great job of explaining the situation in which providers of services to people with disabilities currently find themselves on this issue.

[Click here](#) to view NYSRA Testimony to the Wage Board.

[Click here](#) to view Capital Tonight minimum wage segment.

COLA Regs for Behavioral Health Services

Regulations on cost of living adjustment for behavioral health have been promulgated and are in the NYS Register. In brief, the rule making increases Medicaid fees paid to certain OMH-licensed programs consistent with the 2014-15 and 2015-16 enacted State budgets and the COLA. Increases are applied to reimbursable costs to support salary increases and salary-related fringe benefit increases. Fee increases are effective as of April 1, 2015, for PROS; Day Treatment Programs serving children; Continuing Day Treatment (CDT) Programs licensed solely under Article 31 of the Mental Hygiene Law, as well as CDT Programs licensed pursuant to Article 28 of the Public Health Law and Article 31 of the Mental Hygiene Law; Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Treatment (IPRT); Partial Hospitalization; and Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEP).

[Click here](#) to view fees listed in the register.

Employment Council: Resources on Hiring Incentives for Business Owners

NYSRA's Employment Council met this week and provided updates and new information about all issues related to employment services to people, adults and students in transition, with disabilities. Of the many topics, one discussion was about the understanding and use of Hiring Incentives for business owners. [Click here](#) a Fact sheet about the federal tax incentives and [click here](#) for the newest NYS State tax incentive information. Also, a recording of the Employment Council meeting is available on the [NYSRA website](#).

Association for Rehabilitation Marketing Upcoming Conference

The annual conference for the Association for Rehabilitation Marketing (ARM) will be held on Tuesday, August 4th and Wednesday, August 5th at the Holiday Inn in New Hartford. NYSRA's Chief Operating Officer, Pat Dowse, will be a presenter at this event. To see agenda and registration information [click here](#).

Supreme Court Uphold's ACA Insurance Subsidies for States

NYSRA's national organization, ACCSES, reports on the Supreme Court's 6-3 decision regarding the Affordable Care Act that permits insurance subsidies to be provided, representing what is widely seen as the last significant legal challenge to the ACA. . The justices said that the Affordable Care Act, as written, does allow subsidies to be provided in the 34 states that refused to set up their own insurance exchanges. The ruling marks the second major win that ACA has had before the Supreme Court since the law's passage in 2010. In other news from ACCSES, they report on two additional issues that of interest.

The first issue deals with a settlement on a class action lawsuit that sought to secure community services for residents of state ICFs/IDD. [Click here](#) to read more on the court's deliberations.

The second issue is with regard to a case study undertaken by the CHIMES Foundation and researchers from George Washington University regarding the impact of Maine Public Law Chapter 101, that directed state agencies to increase supported and integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities and ultimately close its sheltered workshops. Key findings in the report include:

- People who had been employed in sheltered workshops have seen their hours worked per week decline. 2/3rds of those previously employed are no longer employed and those who are working earn less per week because of the reduction in the number of hours worked.
- In 2008, the year Maine Public Law Chapter 101 went into effect, 39.5% of people with disabilities were employed. That number dropped to 34.1% by 2012.
- Sheltered workshops in Maine were employing 558 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) in 2001. There were no people employed in sheltered workshops in 2010. The number of people with IDD who were served in integrated employment in Maine also declined during the years from 2001 to 2014.
- Employment data for people with intellectual disabilities in Maine show an average of only 12 hours worked per week in 2011, the lowest in the nation.
- After the passage of the law, non-work placements increased dramatically from 550 to 3,178.
- Level of disability was one characteristic commonly cited as a factor impeding placements for some people who are no longer employed.

[Click here](#) to view report.

New York State Rehabilitation Association
155 Washington Avenue, Suite 410, Albany, NY 12210
518.449.2976
www.nyrehab.org

