



S U P P O R T

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF S.3118 – Mannion / A.134 - Cruz

The CSEA strongly supports this legislation.

This legislation amends the mental hygiene law to require the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to create an emergency staffing plan when staffing levels are below 90% in a OPWDD region.

Throughout the state, OPWDD staffing levels are at a crisis level. Prior to 2020, attritions were already outnumbering new hires, but the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted hiring even more. Currently, thousands of positions sit vacant, but the need to care for OPWDD clients has not gone away. Due to this, OPWDD has closed facilities and has mandated direct care professionals work unprecedented levels of overtime, resulting in more employees leaving and diminished morale for the remainder.

Requiring OPWDD to have an emergency staffing plan in place will help them prepare for the future. The plan will force them to have procedures in place in order to limit mandatory overtime, recruit more direct care professionals to keep homes and programs open and retain existing employees through enhanced pay.

This legislation will help to ensure that OPWDD is constantly evaluating their hiring needs and making them act when the number of employees falls below this threshold. This will better serve OPWDD clients and the workers who serve them.

On behalf of more than 300,000 active and retired, public and private employees across New York State, CSEA strongly urges the passage of this legislation.

Fran Turner
Director