

Rural Health Sign On Letter FY2023

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Majority Leader
188 State Street
Legislative Office Building, Room 907
Albany, NY 12247

Speaker Carl E. Heastie
LOB 932
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie,

We are writing to urge support for a critically important investment in New York's rural people and places.

That investment is made through two programs--the Rural Health Network Development Program (RHNDP) and the Rural Health Care Access Development Program (RHCADP)—both administered by the Charles D. Cook Office of Rural Health within the NYS Department of Health.

The funding to these programs has significantly eroded in the past several years. The Rural Health Network Development Program and the Rural Health Care Access Development Program were jointly funded at the level \$16.2M annually as recently as SFY2017. Since that time, they have experienced a 42% reduction in funding, dropping to the current level of \$9.41M. The dramatic decline in support for these programs has negatively impacted the health of rural communities across NYS.

We are pleased that the Governor's SFY23 Budget Proposal does not propose even deeper cuts to these programs, but we believe it is important to restore this critically important source of support to rural communities at the previous funding level of \$16.2M.

There are 32 Rural Health Networks (RHNs) serving rural communities all over the state and the overarching goal of the RHNDP is to improve the health of New Yorkers living in rural areas by supporting the development and operation of Rural Health Networks. Although RHNs can differ significantly from one location to another, all RHNs share the same fundamental charge to facilitate cooperative and collaborative efforts among rural health providers, improve access to essential services, enhance coordination of services, increase the efficiency of service delivery, and preserve the stability and viability of rural communities. Services provided are catered to the community in which they serve and cover a wide range, from oral health initiatives to tobacco cessation to food systems work and everything in between.

The RHCADP provides funds to 44 of NYS' rural hospitals to help them reduce duplication of services, improve operational efficiencies and develop affiliations with community-based providers. Funding from this program allows hospitals to strengthen their infrastructure and adjust capacity by doing things like purchasing or replacing medical equipment; ramping up technology to deliver telehealth services; renovating clinical space to permit sub-specialists to practice at rural hospitals; standing up a new wound care program; and, modernizing IT carts for ergonomic entry of data into the hospital's electronic health record. These are just a few examples of the work accomplished through this program. RHCADP allows small rural hospitals to adapt to the current changes taking place in health care delivery and build sustainable services that will keep them open and serving their rural communities.

On behalf of the work performed by the 32 Rural Health Networks and 44 Rural Hospitals which receive funding through these two programs we are requesting that funding for these two programs be restored to \$16.2M.

Sincerely,

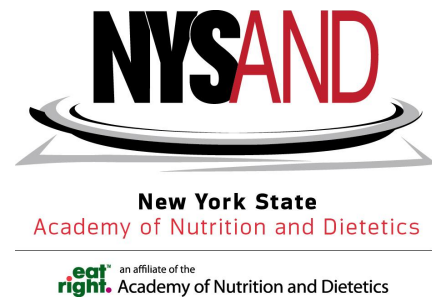
Helen Evans, President, [New York State Association for Rural Health \(NYSARH\) Board of Directors](#), on behalf our dues paying members across NYS

See Attached List of Signatures:

Hugh Parry, Interim President, 2-1-1 New York State
Marie Mongeon, Senior Director of Policy, Community Healthcare Association of NYS
Samantha Fletcher, Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers, NYS
Jessica Garay, Public Policy Coordinator, NYS Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Kate Downes, Outreach Director, NY FarmNet
Gus Birkhead, Director of Policy & Advocacy, NYS Public Health Association
Maria Alvarez, Executive Director, New York Statewide Senior Action Council
David Little, Executive Director, Rural Schools Association of NYS

Eric Burton, CEO, Adirondack Health Institute
Carrie Whitwood, Executive Director, Ardent Solutions, Inc.
Wes Gillingham, Associate Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper
Dr. Shari Weiss, Executive Director, Cayuga County Community Health Network, Inc.
Kimberly Lorraine, Executive Director, Chenango Health Network, Inc.
Jeanne Darling, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension Delaware
Joanne Brown-Garringer, Executive Director, Cortland Chenango Rural Services, Inc.
Greg Richards, Executive Director, Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc.
Nicole Anjeski, Public Health Director, Cortland County Health Department
Thomas Caminiti, Board President, Cortland Loaves and Fishes
Miranda Capriotti, Outreach & Education Manager, East End Food Institute
Steven Kelley, President & CEO, Ellenville Regional Hospital
Kim Osborne, CEO, Family Health Network

Erika F. Flint, Executive Director, Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization
 Mark R. Evans, President, Greene County Paramedics
 Toni Carroll, Network Director, Greene County Rural Health Network
 Jennifer Yartym, SVP, President, Guthrie Cortland Medical Center
 Ann Battaglia, Chief Executive Officer, Healthy Community Alliance, Inc.
 Belinda Hoad, Executive Director, The Institute for Human Services, Inc.
 Matt Hollenbeck, Owner/Operator, Hollenbeck's Cider Mill
 Hal McCabe, Mayor, Village of Homer
 Bret Morris, Farm Manager, Main Street Farms
 Joey Marie Horton, CEO, North Country Family Health Center, Inc.
 Joanna Loomis, Deputy Director, North Country Initiative
 Mark Antonio-Smith, Founder, The Nurtury For Kids, LLC
 Patrick Waite, Deputy Executive Director, Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
 James Karasek, County Legislator, Oswego County Legislature
 Daniel Mather, Practice Manager, Oswego County OB-GYN, P.C.
 Leanna Clevelan, Coordinator of Community Health, Rural Health Network of Oswego County
 Mark Bordeau, Executive Director, Rural Health Network of South Central NY
 Martin Stallone, MD MBA, CEO, Schuyler Hospital Org
 Jackie Leaf, Executive Director, Seven Valleys Health Coalition, Inc.
 Donna Kahm, President and CEO, Southern Tier Health Care System, Inc
 Ann Marie Snell, Executive Director, St. Lawrence County Health Initiative, Inc.
 Amanda G Langseder, Executive Director, Sullivan 180
 Lise-Anne Deoul, Director of Aging Services, Sullivan County Office for the Aging
 Colleen Monaghan, Chairperson, Sullivan County Rural Health Network
 Erik J. Bitterbaum, President, SUNY Cortland
 John Quaintance, President, SUNY Sullivan
 Patrick Dewine, Executive Director, United Way of Greater Oswego County
 Teresa Woolson, President, VOW Foundation
 Melanie Rhodes, Executive Director, Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center, Inc





National Association of Social Workers
NEW YORK STATE CHAPTER



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