



New York State Campaign  
For Mental Health Housing

**New York State Campaign for  
Mental Health Housing Members**

- Association for Community Living
- Association for Rehabilitative Case Management and Housing
- Bowery Resident's Committee
- Brooklyn Community Housing and Services
- Catholic Charities of Cortland County
- Center for Urban Community Services
- Central New York Services, Inc.
- Coalition for the Homeless
- Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled
- Coalition of Voluntary Mental Health Agencies, Inc.
- Community Access
- Concern for Independent Living
- Corporation for Supportive Housing
- Council on Homeless Policies and Services
- Episcopal Church
- Family Residences and Essential Enterprises
- FECS
- Heritage Health & Housing
- Housing First!
- Human Development Services of Westchester
- Institute for Community Living
- Lawrence House
- League of Women Voters of New York State
- Loeb House
- Long Island Center for Independent Living
- Mental Health Association-Columbia-Greene
- Mental Health Association- Ulster County
- Mental Health Association of NYC
- Mental Health Association of NYS
- Mental Health Association of Westchester
- MFY Legal Services
- Mount Sinai - Elmhurst Hospital Center
- MTI Residential Services
- Multi-County Community Development Corporation
- National Alliance on Mental Illness for NYC-Metro
- National Alliance on Mental Illness for New York State
- New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services
- NYS Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
- Occupations, Inc.
- Odyssey House
- Project Hospitality
- Project Renewal
- Rehabilitation Support Services
- Rights for Imprisoned People with Psychiatric Disabilities
- Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers
- SCAP, Inc.
- Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
- Services for the Underserved, Inc.
- Southern Tier Environments for Living
- Supportive Housing Network of New York
- Urban Justice Center
- Venture House
- West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing, Inc.

1 Commerce Plaza, Suite 1103  
Albany, NY 12210  
Telephone: (518) 465-7330  
Facsimile: (518) 465-0273  
[sean@lobbywr.com](mailto:sean@lobbywr.com)  
[www.campaign4housing.org](http://www.campaign4housing.org)

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Contact: Weingarten, Reid & McNally at (518) 465-7330

## **Pataki Vetoes Bill to Help New Yorkers with Mental Illnesses and Give State Needed Planning Tool** *Advocates Call for Override of Mental Health Housing Waiting List Veto*

(August 17, Albany, NY) Governor Pataki today vetoed legislation critical to allowing people with mental illnesses the chance of recovery and ensuring the smart investment of state dollars. The bill calls for the state Office of Mental Health (OMH) to work with local communities on identifying and tracking the number of adults with serious mental illnesses who've applied and are waiting for supportive housing, and to create a monthly statewide waiting list.

Steve Coe, Chair of *New York State Campaign for Mental Health Housing* ([campaign4housing.org](http://campaign4housing.org)), said Governor Pataki's veto of the Mental Health Housing Waiting List bill (A-2895a), is a major blow to people with mental illnesses and their families, and a step backwards for New York State. The group is calling on the New York State Legislature to override the Governor's veto.

"Governor Pataki had the opportunity to demonstrate compassion and employ common-sense by supporting this solid piece of legislation," said Coe. "Instead, he chose to veto a bill that would have created a valuable planning tool for the state, counties and local housing providers. The state has not conducted a needs assessment of their mental health housing stock in over 10 years. What's more, a statewide waiting list would ensure that funds are directed in a smart, effective way and that people with mental illnesses have the opportunity to live in safe, affordable homes and the chance for recovery."

"All of the thousands of members of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York State are deeply disappointed in Governor Pataki and his veto of the community mental health housing waiting list legislation," said J. David Seay, Executive Director of NAMI-NYS. "The term 'compassionate conservative' has now been defined."

"We are extremely disappointed by this veto," said Antonia Lasicki, Executive Director of Association for Community Living. "The bill had no known opposition. It was passed unanimously by both houses of the legislature and had the support of over 125 organizations and individuals representing mental health providers, consumers, family members, advocates, housing developers, social policy experts, legal rights organizations and concerned citizens. Even those charged with implementing the bill, the New York State Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors representing every county throughout the state, backed the measure, as did the city of New York."

According to Coe, the New York State Campaign for Mental Health Housing will continue its mission of helping people of all ages living with serious mental illnesses in New York State access safe, affordable housing and the opportunity for an active life in the community. The campaign is launching a multi-year effort to educate the public and government policy makers about the need for New York State to undertake a comprehensive plan to provide appropriate housing to people with serious mental illnesses.

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Coe said a smarter investment of state funds in mental health housing with support services such as counseling and job training will make it possible for people with serious mental illnesses to improve their quality of life at little or no cost to the public.

“The waiting list legislation is the first step in helping match an individual’s needs with suitable housing and services in the most integrated setting,” said Coe. “It is a key feature of the campaign’s reform agenda and a powerful first step in identifying current and future needs for mental health housing in New York State. The Campaign members are sincerely grateful to the bill’s sponsors, Senator Thomas Morahan and Assemblyman Peter Rivera for their leadership on this issue. We are optimistic that the Legislature will again demonstrate their commitment to all New Yorkers with mental illnesses by overriding the Governor’s veto.”

*The New York State Campaign for Mental Health Housing is a bi-partisan, broad-based coalition of over 60 organizations representing mental health providers, consumers, family members, advocates, housing developers, social policy experts, legal rights organizations and concerned citizens whose goal is to address the housing needs of people with serious mental illnesses.*

*Additional Contacts*

Steve Coe, Chair of Campaign at (917) 331-8626

J. David Seay, Executive Director of NAMI-NYS at (518) 462-2000 ext.207

Antonia Lasicki, Executive Director of Association for Community Living at (518) 688-1682 ext.25