



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roy J. McDonald

## McDonald Applauds Passage of Legislation to Protect People with Special Needs

ROY J. MCDONALD June 22, 2012

| ISSUE: **MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

| COMMITTEE: **MENTAL HEALTH**

Albany – Senator Roy McDonald thanked his colleagues in the legislature for passing legislation to protect people with special needs and disabilities through the creation of a justice center to prevent, investigate and prosecute abuse and neglect of individuals placed in state care. The bill, sponsored by McDonald in the Senate (S.7749), passed both houses of the legislature and awaits the governor’s signature to become law.

“We’ve come a long way since learning about the atrocities that occurred to individuals placed in our care, from a New York Times investigative report last year, and I thank my colleagues in both houses and the Governor for working together on this important issue,” said McDonald. “As a grandfather to two boys who might someday be institutionalized themselves, it gives me great confidence to know that there are protections in place for them, and all our vulnerable citizens, so if abuse happens it can be reported, investigated and prosecuted.”

The special needs act creates a Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, a new organization with the responsibility over the protection of health, safety and welfare of vulnerable persons. This center will improve the state’s response to allegations of

abuse and neglect for individuals served in both residential and non-residential facilities.

“It’s our responsibility to protect people who cannot protect themselves, support the caregivers who do an outstanding job in difficult situations, and hold accountable the ‘bad apples’ who take advantage of a disabled individual,” said McDonald.

McDonald, who chairs the Senate Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee, has also introduced a “promise legislative package” to protect and assist the support professionals working in group homes for individuals with disabilities.

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