

## COMPARISON: SENATE VS ASSEMBLY ONE HOUSE POSITIONS

Both Houses of the Legislature have passed their one-House budget resolutions and both Houses have printed associated bills detailing respective language and funding amounts. On Monday they will begin the process of agreeing to a final budget. The General Conference Committee consisting of leadership (Co-Majority Leaders Skelos-Klein, Speaker Silver, Senate Finance and Ways and Means committee chairs Defranco and Farrell and other key members) will determine spending targets for the different "Joint Budget Subcommittees" or "tables," among them the Senate and Assembly Mental Hygiene Joint Budget Subcommittee.

Following are the highlights of interest in the Senate and Assembly one-house budget proposals. While they reflect the sincere wishes of many advocates and legislators, they also include a substantial amount of political posturing and in no way guarantee anything. This should not be cause for discouragement but rather for determination in the face of long term challenges.

### OPWDD

#### ? COLA/Trend

- o **Senate** Expresses its intent to provide a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Trend for all human services agencies but leaves dollar amounts to be determined (Senate previously indicated verbally that it would propose a 1% increase effective 1-1-15).
- o **Assembly** The Assembly's budget proposal includes a 2% trend/COLA for OPWDD and all Human Services programs effective 4-1-14. The Assembly budget bill contains \$41.5 million and \$3.5 million respectively for OPWDD nonprofit providers.
- o **Comment** A critical issue and the focus of Coalition advocacy in the budget's closing stretch. Governor's opposition to additional Medicaid spending and intense competition for funds from big issues (i.e. tax cuts, UPK) comprise major obstacles. The lack of clarity in the Senate's position may be source for concern. Hopefully the increasing national status of wage issues associated with various low paid employees enhances the prospects for this issue.

#### ? Development

- o **Senate** No additional funds.
- o **Assembly** No additional funds.
- o **Comment** A critical issue and the subject of post budget strategy, reevaluation and specific bills in the post-budget legislative session.

#### ? DSP Credentialing Pilot Program

- o **Senate** Provides \$750,000 for a pilot program for credentialing direct support professionals.
- o **Assembly** Does not include this program.

#### ? Early Intervention Rate Increase

- o **Senate** Does not appear to include Early Intervention in the COLA/Trend.
- o **Assembly** Includes Early intervention in the 2% Human Services COLA.