

The following is a note from Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg to the Governor's Office urging the Governor to sign the "Front Door" bill, A.8846-C/S.6641-C. As noted in my prior email, the betting is that the Governor will veto the measure. Harvey is a parent of a man with developmental disabilities and the sponsor of the Front Door bill.

The Front Door and its negative impact on getting critical services to people in need, especially those living at home, is a major issue.

The Governor's decision is due on November 21st.

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As a follow up to my letter to the Governor dated June 23, 2014 regarding A.8846-C, I write to provide updated supporting information now that the bill is before the Governor for action.

During the past month, I revisited the Front Door issues that led me to introduce this legislation in the first place. My outreach efforts indicate that the Front Door process continues to be problematic. Families, provider agencies and individuals who assist applicants through the process continue to report obstacles in the system that impede and delay delivery of services to those in need.

In addition to basic access issues, the current wait list does not appear to provide an accurate description of the population waiting for services and their level of need. It is imperative that a mechanism be implemented so that individuals with urgent needs can be identified, prioritized and served expeditiously. Unfortunately, I have often witnessed perilous outcomes when an individual with an urgent need for services is home with a caregiver unable to provide the level of care warranted. These situations often result in law enforcement involvement and/or hospitalizations that are inappropriate, unwarranted and costly to taxpayers.

As I stated in my earlier letter, I am hopeful that the provisions contained in A.8846-C will help to rectify some of these ongoing problems. I ask that the Governor sign the bill, thereby taking definitive and responsible steps to rectify these continuing problems. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Harvey Weisenberg

Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore