



Monroe County Legislature

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DEMOCRATIC LEADER

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COMMITTEES:

Environment & Public Works
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May 31, 2005

To the Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
407 County Office Building
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

RE: Memorializing New York State Department of Health Commissioner Antonia C. Novello to Expedite Submission of the Nursing Facilities Transition and Diversion Medicaid Waiver Program Application to the Federal Government

Honorable Legislators:

Last October, Governor George Pataki signed into law legislation to create a Nursing Facilities Transition and Diversion Medicaid Waiver Program. This initiative, which will allow certain individuals in nursing homes to be cared for in his or her own residence through the Medicaid program, could save New York State taxpayers \$150 million a year. Care costs for people eligible for the program could drop by half, from approximately \$160 per day to \$80 per day.

Indisputably, the lives of thousands of New York's elderly and individuals disabled by multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, muscular dystrophy and Alzheimer's disease could be dramatically improved by the implementation of this program. It would give these residents the freedom to live independently in their communities by receiving care at home, rather than in an institutionalized medical facility.

Throughout our state, counties are grappling with overwhelming increases in Medicaid costs. Monroe County is no exception, a reality that local elected officials and residents know too well. The intent of the Nursing Facilities Transition and Diversion Medicaid Waiver Program, unanimously supported by the New York State Legislature, is to provide quality, community-based care to those in need in the most cost-effective manner.

Regrettably, the implementation of the program has stalled. The New York State Department of Health has not yet submitted its Nursing Facility Transition and Diversion Waiver application to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and may not do so until next March. This is unconscionable.

For the advocacy groups and disabled men and women who have fought for the Nursing Facilities Transition and Diversion Medicaid Waiver Program, which will mean freedom for thousands of New



