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January 5, 2012

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We, the undersigned, respectfully request that you not propose the changes to the Title XX funding allocations that have been suggested in previous years which would reallocate the discretionary portion of Title XX funding to the mandatory domestic violence and children services. This discretionary funding has been used for over 30 years by New York City to fund senior centers. Redirecting the discretionary portion of Title XX funding would have a disastrous effect on the senior center network in New York City. These senior centers would not simply decrease program offerings and staff; they could close completely, leaving the seniors who depend on them nowhere to go. Estimates have placed the number of senior centers that would need to close at around 105 citywide.

While restoring Title XX funding has received significant bipartisan support and has been a priority for us in the past, it is our hope to avoid this struggle so we can focus on other pressing matters. We believe that other revenue-raising strategies combined with the changes to the tax code will eliminate the need to propose such devastating funding cuts to senior programs.

The reallocation of Title XX funds, and the subsequent senior center closures, would lead to seniors isolated in their homes with no support network. Senior centers are an integral part of the community network that keeps seniors in their homes. Without a support network, seniors would be faced with a significant decrease in access to healthy food, and a greatly increased risk of injury or illness that leads to expensive nursing home placement.

We hope that we can count on your support and look forward to discussing the issue further if you or your office has any questions.

Sincerely,



Diane J. Savino,
New York State Senator, 23rd District
Chair, NYS Senate Children & Families Committee



Martin J. Golden
New York State Senator, 22th District



Andrew J. Lanza
New York State Senator, 24th District