

The New York State Assembly
Annual Report



**20
25**



Committee on
People with Disabilities

Speaker Carl E. Heastie
Angelo Santabarbara, PE, CHAIR



Angelo Santabarbara
Assembly Member 111th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on People with Disabilities

COMMITTEES
Mental Health
Racing and Wagering
Energy
Governmental Employees

December 15, 2025

Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie:

I am pleased to submit the 2025 Annual Report for the Assembly Committee on People with Disabilities. As the father of a young adult with autism, it is an honor to be the Chair of this committee. The members of this committee and I worked hard to advance legislative solutions that addressed the challenges New Yorkers with disabilities are facing, many of which I have witnessed firsthand.

In my first year as Chair, I collaborated with many in the community to hear their concerns and identify a path forward. Access to quality services and supports continues to be a common concern across the state. Low wages, high turnover rates, and staffing shortages persist, which impact the availability of services, including employment and housing supports.

During this past session, people with disabilities were a focus of both budget initiatives and legislative efforts. The Assembly passed legislation to protect people with disabilities' communication rights and give people with disabilities and their families a more active role in improving service delivery. The committee continues to review legislation that improves the lives of people with disabilities and supports them in pursuing the lives they choose.

Once again, thank you for your support for the Committee on People with Disabilities. People with disabilities and their families appreciate your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angelo Santabarbara".

Angelo Santabarbara
Chair
Assembly Standing Committee on People with Disabilities

**2025 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Angelo Santabarbara
Chair**

Committee Members

Majority

Khaleel Anderson
Chris Burdick
Patrick Carroll
Harvey Epstein
Karen McMahon
Stefani Zinerman

Minority

Jodi Giglio, Ranking Minority Member
Joe Sempolinski

Committee Staff

Nicole Parisi, Committee Clerk

Program and Counsel Staff

Janice Nieves, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Elizabeth McCormick, Analyst
Michael Hegarty, Associate Counsel
Alice Bagley, Executive Secretary

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INTRODUCTION

The Committee on People with Disabilities focuses on ensuring that all people with disabilities, including developmental and physical disabilities, are provided the opportunity to participate fully in their community.

The Committee has legislative oversight of programs administered and licensed by the State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). The Committee also has statutory oversight over the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD). OPWDD serves over 100,000 New Yorkers every year.

The Committee also works closely with the New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Mental Health, the Assembly Standing Committee on Health, and the Assembly Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities, to ensure that the Assembly is helping to improve the lives of all people with disabilities in New York State.

During the 2025 legislative session, the Committee reported several bills meant to address pressing issues for people with disabilities, such as increasing transparency within OPWDD, and giving people with disabilities and their families more channels to voice their concerns.

This report describes the Committee's major legislative activities during the 2025 session.

STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26 enacted budget includes critical resources for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The enacted budget provides an increase of **\$2.5 billion** for the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) over the enacted budget for the prior fiscal year. In addition, the Legislature provided an increase of **\$28.7 million** over the Executive proposal. For SFY 2025-26, total OPWDD funding is **\$10.1 billion**.

Within OPWDD, the following proposals and appropriations were enacted in the SFY 2025-26 Budget:

- \$1.19 million in funding for various Legislative initiatives for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII)

The Legislature provides a 2.1% Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII) for human services providers, and additional 0.5% targeted salary increases to support staff, direct care staff, clinical staff, and non-executive administrative staff. The total state share cost for SFY 2025 is **\$262.6 million** for all Mental Health agencies, with **\$143.5 million** for OPWDD providers.

SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION

The Committee on People with Disabilities is committed to supporting and advancing legislation that will improve the lives of people with disabilities in a variety of ways. This year, the Committee on People with Disabilities reported out and the Assembly passed the following significant legislative measures:

1. Task Force on Employment for People with Disabilities

A.33 (Burdick)/S.4511 (Ramos)

Passed Assembly

This bill would establish a task force under the Department of Labor to promote competitive integrated employment of people with disabilities.

2. Statewide Group Home Families Working Group

A.1130-A (Santabarbara)/S.7794 (Fahy)

Passed Assembly

This bill would establish the Statewide Group Home Families Working Group to inform OPWDD about matters of importance related to group homes.

3. Blue Ribbon Commission on the Service Delivery System for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

A.6021-B (Santabarbara)/S.4841-A (Fahy)

Passed Assembly

This bill would establish a Blue Ribbon Commission to conduct a study on systemic reforms that can be made to ensure a sustainable set of supports and services are available to all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

4. Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council Annual Report

A.7560-A (Santabarbara)/A.7793 (Fahy)

Passed Assembly

This bill would require the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council to submit an annual report on the activities of the council.

HEARINGS AND ROUNTABLES

Access to Residential Placements Hearing

The Assembly Standing Committee on People with Disabilities held a public hearing on Monday, November 3, 2025, to examine the challenges New Yorkers with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) have faced in accessing appropriate residential placements. With nearly 35,000 individuals living in Certified Residential Opportunities operated or overseen by OPWDD, many families reported that securing a placement can take months or even years, delaying access to other essential community-based supports.

The hearing also addressed barriers for individuals seeking non-certified housing options, including limited affordable and accessible housing, inadequate transportation, and staffing shortages in programs that provide in-home and community habilitation services. Testimony was provided by individuals with I/DD, their families, and service providers, offering insight into these ongoing challenges and identifying strategies to strengthen residential supports for people with varying levels of need across New York State.

APPENDIX A

2025 SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS
REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON

People with Disabilities

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 3

ASSEMBLY SENATE TOTAL
BILLS BILLS BILLS

BILLS REPORTED FAVORABLE TO:

Codes	0	0	0
Judiciary	0	0	0
Ways and Means	8	0	8
Rules	1	0	1
Floor	0	0	0
TOTAL	9	0	9

COMMITTEE ACTION

Held For Consideration	1	0	1
Defeated	0	0	0
Enacting Clause Stricken	0	0	0
REMAINING IN COMMITTEE	21	5	26

BILLS REFERENCE CHANGED TO:

Social Services 1

TOTAL	1	0	1
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APPENDIX B

FINAL ACTION ON BILLS REPORTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN 2025

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.33 (Burdick)	S.4511 (Ramos)	Passed Assembly	Establish a task force to promote competitive integrated employment of people with disabilities.
A.226 (Cruz)	S.4907 (Fahy)	Reported to Assembly Committee on Ways and Means	Require OPWDD to establish an emergency staffing plan for state operated facilities to help incentivize a more stable workforce when the turnover rate in a particular region is over 10%.
A.999 (Clark)	S.382 (Brouk)	Reported to Assembly Committee on Ways and Means	Expand the list of qualifying diagnoses for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to include Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
A.1130-A (Santabarbara)	S.7794 (Fahy)	Passed Assembly	This bill would establish the Statewide Group Home Families Working Group to inform OPWDD about matters of importance related to group homes.
A.3572 (Santabarbara)	No Same As	Reported to Assembly Committee on Ways and Means	Expand the list of qualifying diagnoses for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to include spina bifida.
A.4834 (Santabarbara)	S.4723 (Fahy)	Passed Assembly	Require the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to publish a report on staffing, facility closures, and clients waiting for care at state-operated residential facilities between April 1st, 2025 and December 1st, 2025.
A.6021-B (Santabarbara)	S.4841-A (Fahy)	Passed Assembly	Establish a Blue Ribbon Commission to conduct a study on systemic reforms that can be made to ensure a sustainable set of supports and services are available to all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
A.7363-C (Santabarbara)	S.7792 (Fahy)	Passed Assembly	Establish the New York State Communication Bill of Rights for People with Disabilities.

A7560-A (Santabarbara)	A.7793 (Fahy)	Passed Assembly	Require the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council to submit an annual report on the activities of the council.
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