

CALLING ALL CONSUMERS, STAFF AND FAMILY MEMBERS TO ALBANY

The OPWDD voluntary system can not sustain cuts of \$200 million or more without massive layoffs, a decline in program quality, increased risk of health and safety problems and agency closings. We cannot and should not remain silent!

Once again, all of the associations have agreed to bring consumers, staff and family members to Albany to pull their legislators off the floor to explain the devastation to programs and services for people with developmental disabilities which will result if they pass the OPWDD budget proposed by Governor Cuomo. Last year we called our campaign "Inclusive Democracy in Action". This year's campaign *"Special needs, not Special Interests"*.

Agencies from regions of the state which are several hours from Albany, are asked to send consumers, staff and, if possible, family members, on **March 8th, 9th, 15th, 22nd, 23rd, 29th and 30th**.

Agencies from the capital region and within an hour or so of Albany are asked to send consumers, staff and, if possible, family members, on **March 7th, 10th, 14th, 16th, 21st, 24th, 28th, and 31st**.

Since we want to ensure coverage each day that the legislature is in session, please e-mail me the date(s) your Affiliate plans on participating and I will check the central calendar and let you know if the date is open.

I will develop a form for you to complete with the name and address of each consumer and staff member participating in the campaign as well as the name of the Assemblymember and Senator that represents the person participating. This will enable me to plan the day so that it is as productive as possible.

If you have any questions please give me a call. I know that this campaign means more work for your staff--I truly appreciate their efforts. The good news is that last year those people who participated enjoyed themselves and found the experience rewarding.