

## SDMA LAW PASSES THE STATE SENATE UNANIMOUSLY

When SDMNY began almost 6 years ago, one of its jobs was to develop an evidentiary base for an SDMA statute—that is, a law that would both encourage the use of SDM and SDMA's, and prevent third parties like healthcare providers, financial institutions, landlords, etc. from discriminating against people with I/DD by refusing to accept their decisions or, in the case of healthcare, their informed consent. Based on our extensive experience working with Decision-Makers and their supporters, we developed “Principles for an SDMA Statute” (available on [our website](#)) which we also workshopped across the state with parent groups convened by Parent to Parent New York, and self-advocates, convened by SANYS.

We were thrilled when, a little more than a year ago, OPWDD drafted a bill that incorporated virtually all of those “Principles”. The OPWDD bill was introduced late in last year’s legislative session, passing the Senate, but never obtaining a bill number or being introduced in the Assembly. In the current session, the bill was reintroduced in the Senate by sponsor Sen. John Mannion, under bill number S7107A, and in the Assembly as A8586A with Assembly Member JoAnne Simon as its sponsor. Yesterday the bill passed the Senate unanimously—a great victory for SDM and for the facilitation process we have developed. (You can [access the bill here](#).)

Because SDMNY is government funded, we are prohibited from “lobbying”, that is, supporting any particular proposed law. We can, however, educate stakeholders and the public more generally, and in that spirit, we share the contact information of the members of the Assembly, Sponsor Jo Anne Simon [[simonj@nyassembly.gov](mailto:simonj@nyassembly.gov)], Mental Health Committee Chair and Co-Sponsor Aileen Gunther [[GuntheA@nyassembly.gov](mailto:GuntheA@nyassembly.gov)], and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie [[Speaker@nyassembly.gov](mailto:Speaker@nyassembly.gov)], and of course your own Assembly Member, should you wish to express your view on this important legislation.

We should, however, celebrate how far New York has come, and the lead the legislature is playing, in recognizing the importance of SDM to ensure the right to decide for everyone, regardless of disability!

