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Contact:

Deborah Fasser

518.689.7270

GOVERNOR CUOMO SIGNS INTO LAW MEASURE ENABLING LOWER-INCOME SENIORS TO REMAIN IN ASSISTED LIVING LONGER, EVEN AS THEIR NEEDS INCREASE

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo Wednesday signed a measure enabling low-income elderly individuals who have mobility challenges and need regular assistance walking to remain in an assisted living setting and avoid placement in a nursing home.

The measure, endorsed by the Empire State Association of Assisted Living (ESAAL), allows providers with an Assisted Living Program (ALP) license to admit and retain residents who need regular assistance walking, or who are chairbound, as long as the residence is equipped and staffed to meet the needs of the resident and the resident's physician endorses the action.

"This legislation is a win for residents and a win for taxpayers," said ESAAL Executive Director Lisa Newcomb. "An ALP residence is designed to safely accommodate a resident who needs additional health care services such as nursing and home care. What's more, the ALP is the only Medicaid-funded assisted living level of care in New York that allows seniors to age in place without the need for more institutional care."

Currently, private-pay residences may retain residents who are chairbound by obtaining an Enhanced Assisted Living Residence license from the state Department of Health. This legislation grants low income individuals the same benefit – allowing them to remain in a more home-like setting.

"This program provides the state with a cost-effective alternative for lower-income seniors, and it allows Medicaid-eligible New Yorkers to "age in place" and maintain their independence by providing the services they need in a community-based setting," said Jim Kane, president of ESAAL and owner of Adirondack Manor Homes for Adults and Willow Park, located in Utica, NY. "This is a smart and safe way for the state to cut costs, as the ALP provides care at less than half the cost of the Medicaid nursing home rate."

ESAAL is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening New York State's assisted living industry and promoting the best interests of providers and residents. It represents 275 Assisted Living Residences, Adult Homes and Enriched Housing Programs throughout New York State. These member residences are home to more than 25,000 seniors.