Bronx Community Board No. 8
Minutes of the Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee
Held on Wednesday, April 10th, 2024, at 7:00pm
BXCB8 Office – Conference Room
Meeting Recording

Welcome and Roll Call
The committee meeting began at 7:02p.m.

Present (5): Rabbi Kaplan (Chair), Margaret Della, Sebastian Chittilappily, Barbara Kail, Josh Land
Absent (1): Omar Murray

Guest: Senator Gustavo Rivera

Announcement of Members Participating due to Extraordinary Circumstances

Approval of Committee Minutes
Committee minutes not ready yet.

Chairperson's Report
We previously met with someone from DOHMH and the Office of Faith Based Health.

-The brand new deputy commissioner is looking to work with us on health care disparities

-Hassan Naveed (OPHC) will work with us and develop plans regarding our forum.

We have the right to request expenses from different agencies, within the city government, some expenses for strengthening health care and hospitals in the area.

We can possibly request, from the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes (OPHC), funding for material, the Forum, and other things that concern the issue of hate.
(The Borough President's office wants to minimize the amount of requests that go out to government agencies.)

Rabbi Kaplan asked what kinds of things we should request?
-In response to Barbara, Rabbi Kaplan said that he will reach out to Margaret Della's committee to find out what they have on their particular agenda.
-Rabbi Kaplan also responded to another committee member regarding items such as: testing strips. Rabbi Kaplan said that he will find out which agency in the City Consolation provides these items.

Presentation by the Office of Senator Gustavo Rivera, chair of the Health Committee
Senator Gustavo Rivera begins his presentation by acknowledging that there are a lot of unresolved issues that center around health care (Medicaid specifically). The governor insists on making cuts in the neighborhood (about 1.2 billion dollars).

Senator Gustavo Rivera states that the Senate is "holding the line," and making sure that these laws do not go through. Even if they do pass, Senator Gustavo Rivera said we want to make sure they are less harmful.

The governor is not only focused on Medicaid, but they are intent on getting rid of other programs that protect vulnerable populations, such as CDPAP (Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program).

Senator Gustavo Rivera and his office are currently also trying to secure federal dollars to extend the "Essential Plan" to undocumented people. It is over 400 million dollars of federal money that will be used to extend care to undocumented individuals.

Recent Bills that Senator Gustavo Rivera Passed:
   1)The "New York Health Care" Act. It acknowledges a single-payer system in the state of New York, and ultimately guarantees healthcare to every New Yorker.

More bills that Senator Gustavo Rivera has introduced recently:
-The notion of removing insurance companies from the "middle place" in the healthcare system.

-The Hospital Closure Bill which was created in response to the hospitals being closed (entirely or partially), There needs to be a process that is more thorough, and it needs to take into account the individuals that will be affected.

Senator Gustavo Rivera acknowledges that many people believe the only way to receive "good healthcare is through good insurance" but this notion simply is not true. He elucidates that insurance companies' models are built around denying care, not providing it. We currently have a multi-payer system which means that the provider will/can be paid from many sources. Whereas, in a single-payer system, one entity pays the bills. Therefore, Senator Gustavo Rivera wants to excise insurance and destroy their business models, because they are not in the business of providing care.

Old Business

New Business
-The two committees will work together regarding the issue of hate.
-Possibly funding from OPHC.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:05p.m.

Minutes recorded by Taya Jackson
Reviewed by Rabbi Bob Kaplan, Chair