

Legislative Update
End-of-the-Session Report

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Each year the NYS Legislature meets during the first half of the calendar year, from January into June. The first half of the session typically places a major focus on budget items, since the NYS budget year begins on April 1 (with the recognition that this year the budget was not enacted until a full month later on May 1). The latter part of the session, from early April until the end-of-session adjournment, which this year occurred on June 10 (with the caveat that the Assembly returned to complete its work on June 20-21), sees a larger focus on non-budgetary policy issues. Most NYSPA issues are non-budgetary, and thus become topics of consideration during the final weeks and even final days of the legislative session.

As with any political, deliberative body, multiple forces and competing factors converge upon the NYS legislature. Importantly, each year NYSPA makes positive strides in raising its profile within the legislature, positioning itself favorably for future engagements.

NYSPA Legislative Wins

NYSPA was successful in its opposition to strong lobbying efforts on behalf of two bills:

- Proposed legislation which would license master's level school psychologists for independent practice outside the schools
- Proposed legislation informally known as "Kyra's Law", which NYSPA believes is well-intended but problematic as currently drafted concerning specific changes to domestic relations law related to child custody and visitation proceedings.

NYSPA Affirmative Priorities

- Prescriptive Authority
- Continuing Education
- Telehealth in Workers' Compensation
- Equitable School Discipline

- PSYPACT

White Paper Initiatives

- The White Paper Initiatives, begun in 2018, have significantly enhanced NYSPA's visibility and relevance within the legislature.
- The first two white papers, with the first focusing on *The Opioid Crisis* and the second focusing on *Violence*, have been distributed to all 212 members of the NYS legislature and to numerous other governmental officials.
- The third white paper, focusing on *Mental Health and the Pandemic*, is now in the final phase of completion.

Grassroots Advocacy

- Executive Lobby Day on February 28, affording NYSPA leadership and lobbyist the opportunity to meet with the sponsors of NYSPA's priority legislation and the leadership in the Senate and Assembly.
- The first in-person Lobby Day in Albany since the pandemic was held on April 24-25, engaging NYSPA members from across the state.
- Continued use of VoterVoice, a powerful and extremely efficient advocacy tool for engaging members in grassroots lobbying. APA has made this powerful tool available to all state, provincial and territorial psychological associations at no cost to the SPTAs. During the 2023 legislative session VoterVoice was again used on multiple occasions, leading to hundreds of lobbying messages from members to their legislators on major issues.

Looking toward 2024

- In conjunction with our lobbyist, NYSPA consistently remains vigilant in seeking ways to advance legislative initiatives favorable to psychology and opposing legislation that would be harmful to our profession.
- Advancing legislation typically requires patience, perseverance and persistence, often across years, slowly gaining support and momentum with legislators.

Thank You... and Let's Move Forward Together!

NYSPA is first and foremost about YOU and the members who support our organization and the legislative agenda. Thank you most especially for the many hundreds of members who sent well over one-thousand messages to legislators on key issues, most especially during the final critical days of the legislative session.

For more information about the Legislative Committee and its current issues, go to the NYSPA website where you can find the LC Reports to Council, which are submitted prior to the four annually scheduled Council meetings.

LC meetings are open to all NYSPA members, and we invite your attendance. LC and Council meetings occur on the same day, with LC meeting in the morning from 9-12 and Council following immediately in the afternoon.

We welcome your interest, ideas and involvement. We want to hear your questions, concerns and suggestions. Your active engagement strengthens NYSPA for the benefit of all psychologists.

Working together is truly a “win-win” for psychology, for NYSPA and our members, and for the people we serve.

Attached at the end of this report is a more detailed overview prepared by NYSPA’s lobbyist, Park Strategies.

Thank you.