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The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing you today to express concern over the proposal to shift nearly $100 million in State costs of 11 4201 school's - private schools for students with disabilities funded directly by the state - to local districts. These schools teach our blind, deaf, and developmentally and physically disabled students throughout the city and desperately need the State's support to continue serving our children.

I am concerned that the shifting of these funds would result in the possibility of current and future students with disabilities losing access to these much needed placements. In addition, the loss of possible funding to these schools would seriously jeopardize budgets and potentially cause their closure.

The Bronx is home to three of these schools: the Lavelle School for the Blind, St. Joseph's School for the Deaf and the New York Institute for Special Education. Words cannot fully encapsulate the importance of their work with our most vulnerable children in the Borough and beyond. Many of these children have arrived to these schools because there currently are not seats within the public school system that can meet and address their needs.

Governor Cuomo, I respectfully ask that you continue to have these schools receive funding directly from the State so that they can continue to serve our children with disabilities.

I thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns with you.

Sincerely,

Ruben

Ruben Diaz Jr.