



July 12, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Executive Chamber  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The undersigned organizations, through our member agencies, represent the majority of New Yorkers with a developmental, intellectual or physical disability, including those who are blind. We write today to respectfully urge you to sign S.7578C/A.8549C, also known as the Preferred Source Modernization Bill, which *unanimously* passed the Senate and Assembly this session.

This legislation brings New York's landmark program of job support for persons with disabilities into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As you know, the Preferred Source Program was created in 1975 after the Willowbrook scandal. In one fell swoop, then-Gov. Hugh Carey and the Legislature turned New York's treatment of persons with disabilities from national disgrace to national model. Only minimal changes have been made in the program since 1975.

S.7578C/A.8549C modernizes multiple terms within the preferred source statute including outdated references to "workshops" and "severely" disabled. It also creates new thresholds for what percentage of a Preferred Source contract must be performed by disabled, or otherwise qualified, persons to receive Preferred Source status. The threshold for OGS review is increased for the first time in 14 years. Finally, it increases opportunities for competitive integrated employment.

By signing this unanimously passed bill, you will be strengthening the Preferred Source Program so it can support more people and turbo-charge its economic benefits for the state while remaining under the watchful eye of regulators and policy makers.

All these changes to the program were called for in two [exhaustive reports](#) by the Rockefeller Institute of Government (2019 and 2021)

You have clearly demonstrated your commitment to New Yorkers with disabilities, notably by your budget priorities, administrative appointments, and creation of the state's first Chief Disabilities Officer. We and the people our organizations support thank you not only for your awareness of these issues but for your action on them.

Signing the Preferred Source Modernization Bill would build on this record and add to New York's proper standing as a model of support for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Mike Alvaro  
President & CEO, Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State



Christopher T. Burke  
Executive Director, NYS Preferred Source Program for New Yorkers who are Blind



Erik Geizer  
CEO, The Arc New York



Russell Snaitth  
New York Alliance for Developmental Disabilities



Tom McAlvanah  
Executive Director, Interagency Council of Developmental Disabilities Agencies



Maureen O'Brien  
President & CEO, New York State Industries for the Disabled



Michael Seereiter  
President & CEO, New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation