



NEW YORK
**ALLIANCE FOR
INCLUSION & INNOVATION**

Memorandum in Support S.7578 (Mannion) and A.8549 (Burdick)

AN ACT to amend state finance law in relation to the preferred source status for entities that provide employment to certain people

The New York Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation (NY Alliance) supports legislation to update current law to modernize the state's preferred source program. As a strong proponent of the preferred source program, NY Alliance supports legislation to ensure the governing statute is updated, reflects current practices, and ensures the viability of this program that's important to the employment of people with disabilities.

The NY Alliance is a statewide association representing nearly 150 not-for-profit provider agencies serving people with disabilities. The NY Alliance envisions a society where people with disabilities are contributing citizens with equal rights and the ability to live full, productive, and meaningful lives.

New York's Preferred Source program was established to create and sustain employment opportunities for New Yorkers with disabilities by directing state and local government agencies to purchase approved products and services. The NYS Office of General Services oversees the Preferred Source List of products and services that are offered and/or produced by affiliated not-for-profit agencies. These not-for-profit agencies employ people with disabilities and serve as the participants in the Preferred Source program. Several NY Alliance members participate in the program.

Employment provides a financial means for people in our society. Work is also an important feature in developing personal and social identities along with societal bonding. It promotes a sense of self-worth for all individuals and provides a way to contribute to society. New York's Preferred Source program is a significant contributor to ensuring that people with disabilities have opportunities to obtain and maintain jobs thereby fostering a person's sense of community and belonging as well as self-esteem, confidence and general health and wellness.

The current statute that governs New York's Preferred Source program was enacted over four decades ago. Minor statutory changes have been made to the statute. The provisions set forth in S.7578 and A.8549 modernize the statute and are necessary. Specifically, the measures correct





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antiquated terminology, outdated language, and practices. The legislation also codifies certain practices relevant to the program for ease of use and transparency.

The NY Alliance strongly supports S.7578 and A.8549 and therefore calls upon the State Assembly and State Senate to pass this important measure.

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