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**NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE  
JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Lawmakers Present Mother & Daughter With the Signed Bill They Inspired**

*New Law will require NYers with a Central Venous Line have access to safe and continued care when discharged from a hospital*

*OSSINING (December 21, 2019)* – Today, Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and Senator David Carlucci along with health advocates presented 14-year-old, stem cell transplant survivor, Dream Shepherd and her mother, Diana Lemon, with a pen certificate, officially recognizing Dream’s Law (A.212/S.474) was signed by Governor Cuomo.

Dream’s Law guarantees safe and continued care for patients with a Central Venous Line after being discharged from the hospital, something not afforded to Dream following her release.

“Dream’s story is one of strength in the face of adversity, but is also a story of the medical system failing New York families,” **said Assemblywoman Galef.** “Senator Carlucci and I advocated for this bill because no family should be left in the lurch when dealing with a life-threatening illness. I am so pleased that the Governor is supportive of this bill and has expanded its coverage.”

“New Yorkers should be able to leave a hospital with the care they need when at home,” **said Senator David Carlucci.** “Central Venous Lines can easily cause infection, and thankfully because of Diana, Dream is here today. We cannot let insurance companies do this to another family. Dream’s Law will better protect New Yorkers, and I thank Assemblywoman Galef and the Governor for their support of the bill.”

“As a parent my goal is to raise my children up to be victors over any circumstances put before them and that’s what has been done. Four long years of lobbying Dream’s law, it’s my intention that this legislation will empower caregivers and give adequate care for patients that need it the most,” **said Diana Lemon, Dream’s mother.**

**Rhonda Ryan, Director of the Family Support Program for Friends of Karen** said, “I have no doubt this law will improve health outcomes for children with pediatric cancer, sickle cell disease, children who have had transplants and any other child who is discharged home with a central venous line. I believe there will be a decreased risk of infections and fewer hospitalizations as a result of this law. We are grateful at Friends of Karen that this important law has been passed. Our professional staff will inform the families with whom we work that

parents/guardians now have the opportunity for professional nursing care in the home if they so choose.”

In December of 2014, Dream had a stem cell transplant to battle Sickle Cell Disease and doctors put in a Central Venous Line that went to Dream’s heart to administer medication. Upon discharge, Dream’s insurance would not cover a home nurse to care for the Central Venous Line because they said it was not medically necessary.

Dream's mother could not afford a caretaker and without the proper medical knowledge had to care for her daughter. In NYS Health facilities, only registered nurses are allowed to administer medications with the use of a Central Venous Line, and according to the New England Journal of Medicine about 28,000 people die each year in Intensive Care Units due to blood stream infections from a Central Venous Line.

In the wake of this harrowing experience, Diana and Dream made it their mission to work with lawmakers so that no other family would find themselves in a similar position.

**Westchester County Executive George Latimer added,** “I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Governor Andrew Cuomo for his support of this legislation, that will truly help to give some of our most vulnerable patients the best possible care,” said Westchester County Executive George Latimer. “Dream’s Law will ensure that all patients who are discharged from local hospitals will continue to have access to specialized treatment from a skilled caretaker, guaranteeing the best chance for recovery from devastating illnesses.”

**Noah Doherty, General Manager Accucare Nursing & Home Care, said,** "I'm proud to be part of a state where our elected officials understand the importance of private duty nursing in the home. Infusion therapy at home can save the life of a medically fragile child. I'd like to thank Senator David Carlucci and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef for their tireless efforts with Dream's Law".

Galef and Carlucci are now working to amend Dream’s Law to apply to all New Yorker’s leaving the hospital, regardless of condition or further care needed so appropriate patient care is part of any discharge plan from a hospital.

Dream’s Law will take effect immediately and can be amended when the legislative session begins in January.

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