



# Ardent Solutions<sup>SM</sup>

Network for Community Health

**Written Testimony of Ardent Solutions, Inc.**

*(Formerly the Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network, Inc.)*

**New York State Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2015-16 Executive Health Budget**

Monday, February 2nd, 2015

10:00 AM

**Chairs:**

Senator Kemp Hannon

Assemblyman Richard Gottfried

**Submitted by:**

Carrie Whitwood, Executive Director

Ardent Solutions, Inc. (formerly the Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network, Inc.) is a Network for Community Health that actively maintains relationships with local, regional, state and federal partners to create synergy within and between systems, organizations, families and individuals that result in a strong culture of health and quality services for our communities. We are comprised of over 100 partnering agencies providing health and wellness services in the southern tier of New York State.

This year the Governor's Executive Budget calls for 15.1% across the board cuts and or contract cancellations for eight (8) programs critical to rural health. Among these is the Rural Health Network Development Program funding which has been the core operating funds for Ardent Solutions, Inc. This funding is crucial as it leverages other dollars that may not be used for operations. Currently, Ardent Solutions employs seven full-time staff.

In addition, the budget proposal indicates that the Rural Health Network Development program and the Rural Health Care Access Development program have been bundled together with multiple unrelated health workforce development programs. I urge you to unbundle and restore the \$6.4 million to the Rural Health Network Development Program funding; and the \$9.8 million to the Rural Access funding.

Ardent Solutions proudly serves rural providers who deeply touch the lives of those greatest in need including, but not limited to: behavioral health professionals, community-based organizations, educational institutions, emergency services personnel, faith-based organizations, governmental partners, healthcare practitioners, healthcare institutions, and small and large business employers.

Ardent Solutions strives to improve the health and wellness of those at highest risk for poor health outcomes including, but not limited to: economically disadvantaged children, families and individuals; individuals living with a behavioral health condition; individuals living with chronic health conditions; and older adults.