

Letters to the Editor

Cuomo's OTB Shame

To the Editor:

Governor Cuomo will host a Democratic governors conference later this month and tell them his successes in New York could, and should, be a model for the nation. Let me educate you on the kind of Democrat he is.

This past fall Governor Cuomo vetoed a bill to restore health care to New York City Off Track Betting retirees. It seems that these retirees lost their health-care coverage when the City of New York and the state allowed the NYC OTB Corp. to go bankrupt. Both state legislative bodies realized the injustice and passed a bill to restore these health benefits. It affected about 900 retirees and as they die off there will be fewer to cover.

The NYC OTB retirees are the only retirees collecting pensions from the New York City Employees Retirement System who are not covered by health insurance. When these employees were fined under the Taylor Law for conducting a strike in the 1970s, they were considered NYC employees. When OTB was bankrupted by the city and state, their benefits were taken away because the city refused to recognize them as retired city workers.

The NYC OTB retirees are now among the ranks of the uninsured after working 20 to 30 years at a job that promised health care in retirement, only to have it taken away by the politicians who claim to represent them and a Governor who affirmed this injustice.

Cuomo is no better than the Republican Governors of Wisconsin, Ohio or New Jersey. They too are taking away benefits earned for years by retirees. It's amazing how a Democratic Governor is adding to the uninsured while the Democratic President is trying to get everyone insured. Cuomo is a hypocrite, cold and heartless. His veto is a shame he will carry for the rest of his political career. He follows an anti-labor and Tea Party agenda while professing to be a Democrat.

SHELDON BEARD