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ALBANY UPDATE September 15, 2006

The State Senate met in Special Session today and unanimously passed a single bill, S.8482 (Libous): <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=S08482&sh=t>
The "mental health parity act" is compromise legislation worked out with the State Assembly, which would require health insurance policies to cover biologically-based mental illnesses in the same manner as physical ailments. Popularly known as "Timothy's Law," after 12-year old Timothy O'Clair who committed suicide in 2001 while suffering from severe depression. The bill became a lobbying priority for Timothy's parents and mental health advocates. It must now pass the Assembly and be signed by the Governor to become law.

The Senate confirmed 4th Department Appellate Division Presiding Justice Eugene Pigott as an Associate Judge of the New York Court of Appeals (the state's highest tribunal). The Senate also confirmed about 50 other gubernatorial appointments to a variety of state public authorities, commissions, and boards, including, but not limited to:

Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Regional Transportation Authorities
Thruway Authority
Workers' Compensation Board
State Insurance Fund
Public Health Council
State Hospital Review and Planning Council
State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council
State Environmental Board
Job Development Authority
State of New York Mortgage Agency
New York Convention Center Operating Corporation
Regional Park, Recreation & Historic Preservation Commissions
Council on the Arts

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