

News Coverage on EffectiveNY

Bill Samuels: Save OTB Workers' Health Insurance

[Celeste Katz](#) [1] [2] [2] [2] [2]

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Bill Samuels of [Effective NY](#) [4] and [New Roosevelt](#) [5] fame is pushing Gov. Cuomo to support [reinstating the benefits of workers formerly employed by the now-defunct NYC OTB](#) [6] -- and it's a subject close to his heart.

"I am all for pension and benefits reform when done in a proper and judicious manner that looks ahead at future retirees, whether in the public or private sector. However, it is a dangerous precedent to not fulfill the promise of pension and health benefits made to workers who entered the system while it was in existence," Samuels said.

"My father, Howard Samuels, was the first chairman of the NYC OTB under Mayor John Lindsay," Samuels continued, "and he would be appalled, as am I, that nearly 40 years later, the government is breaking its promise to these retirees by not continuing their health benefits when they are most needed."

More than a year ago, [an appeals court affirmed](#) [7] the city should not be on the hook for funding the workers' health care.

[A bill](#) [8] now online in the state Legislature, if passed, "Directs the state to reimburse the city of New York for the health care benefits of the retirees of the New York city off-track betting corporation; appropriates \$7,000,000 therefor."

[Cuomo vetoed a similar bill last year](#) [9], and today, a Cuomo spokesman declined comment on

his intentions, if any, regarding this year's reincarnation.

Below is a support memo from the AFL-CIO cited by Samuels.

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