



New York Advocates and Faith and Labor Leaders Urge Governor to Sign Bipartisan Child Care Task Force Bill

Congratulations to the NY Legislative Women's Caucus; the Women of Color Task Force of the Black, Hispanic, Puerto Rican and Asian Legislative Caucus; Assembly Member Ellen Jaffee and Senator Tony Avella; the legislative leaders of both houses; and all those who voted overwhelmingly on June 14, 2017 to establish a bipartisan Child Care Availability Task Force.

Only six weeks ago, we stood with leaders of the Legislative Women's Caucus and the Women of Color Task Force at a press conference to express our common frustration and anger at the cuts to child care subsidies in the 2017 State Budget. At the press conference, Assembly Member Jaffee, chair of the Assembly Committee for Children and Families, stated her intention to introduce and pass legislation to create a bipartisan Task Force to examine the extent of the unmet need for affordable, high-quality child care and make recommendations for long-term solutions.

As advocates for children and families, we actively supported the Task Force legislation. This year's funding cut of \$7 million for subsidies was not just a decision to deny an estimated 900 more families the ability to access child care. It represented a misconception by some policymakers that there is not a child care crisis that threatens our children, our communities, and - increasingly - our economy. This Task Force - adequately resourced and with representatives from the child care workforce and advocacy communities among its ranks - can play a critical role in developing a comprehensive statewide strategy for significantly expanding access to quality, affordable child care for all New York children and families.

The budget cuts and the subsequent legislative response has sparked the growth of a new and still expanding coalition of organizations that share a common interest in ensuring access to affordable, quality child care for all New York families. We expect to continue our vigilance and to work with the Legislature to ensure that child care remains a priority as we head into 2018.

If we want to have a ready workforce; if we want to see our economic development initiatives bear fruit; if we want all our children to thrive and to enter their school years ready to learn, we must start with the appropriate resources - access to quality, affordable child care and the workforce to support those programs. We urge the Governor to promptly sign the bill, convene the Task Force, and direct it to the resources it needs to get to work on devising a plan to strengthen the state's struggling child care system.

Signed,

Cynthia Herriott, Vice President for Public Policy, AAUW NYS Board

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Donna Dolan, Executive Director, New York Paid Leave Coalition
Beverly Neufeld, Executive Director, PowHer NY
Tim Hathaway, Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse New York
Catherine Barnett, Executive Director, ROC United
Thomas DeMond, Board President, RocACTS (Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Society)
Barbara Ann Mattle, Stepping Stones Learning Center
Larry Marx, CEO, The Children's Agenda
Diana Noriega, Chief Program Officer, The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.
Kate Breslin, President and CEO, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
Cora Greenberg, Executive Director Westchester Children's Association
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