



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Frank Padavan

Padavan Calls For Governor, Legislature To Restore Child Abuse Prevention Funding

FRANK PADAVAN March 23, 2009

New York State Senator Frank Padavan (Queens) today called for Governor Paterson and his legislative colleagues to restore the funding for child abuse prevention services contained within the 2009-2010 Executive Budget. Padavan joined his fellow members of the New York State Senate Republican Conference Urban Issues Task Force in calling for the restoration of the funding before April 1st which marks the start of Child Abuse Prevention Month and the 2009-2010 State Fiscal Year.

The Governor has proposed a 25 percent cut in funding for the Healthy Families Home Visiting program along with the elimination \$34 million in funding for the Community Optional Prevention Services (COPS). Funding from COPS goes to programs such as Healthy Families New York, Nurse Family Partnership and additional programs instrumental in preventing child abuse. Healthy Families New York provides essential support to mothers during pregnancy and helps reduce low birth-weight amongst newborns by 60 percent.

“Like most of the issues related to the budget, Governor Paterson, Speaker Silver and Senate Majority Leader Smith have been quiet on the cuts to these vital programs that will help prevent child abuse in New York,” Padavan said. “All children deserve to live in a safe and healthy environment from the moment they are born and throughout their lives. Cutting

this important funding would unfortunately put too many children at risk for abuse or neglect and that is why it's critical for the full restoration of these funds."

Padavan noted that since 2000 the number of abused children in New York City has been on the rise. In 2000 the number of reported abused children in New York City alone was 25,458 increasing to 33,454 reported cases in 2007, an increase of 31 percent. Estimates also indicate that New York spends \$2.5 billion to treat the consequences of child abuse while only investing \$25 million in primary child abuse prevention related programs. Across the country, approximately 1,300 children die each year due to abuse and neglect.

"As increased stress is placed on families facing new economic challenges, cases of child abuse and neglect are growing at a startling, alarming and frightening rate. Governor Paterson, do the right thing and restore this funding to help protect our children from abuse and neglect," Padavan said.