



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

Senate Co-Leader Jeff Klein and State Senators Diane Savino and David Carlucci propose nearly \$200 million in affordable day care subsidies to help New York's working families

DAVID CARLUCCI January 15, 2014

| ISSUE: **FAMILIES**



New report shows that the IDC's Affordable New York proposals would critically change financial health for state's low- and middle-income parents

SUFFERN, NY – Flanked by working mothers and child care advocates, New York State Senate Co-Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester), Senator Diane Savino (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn), and Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland) pitched nearly \$200 million in day care subsidies that would help hard-working New York parents afford the skyrocketing costs of child care. The senators, all

members of the Senate's Independent Democratic Conference, have made affordable child care a cornerstone of their 2014 legislative agenda, known as Affordable New York.

"Today, New Yorkers face the highest daycare costs in the country," Senate Co-Leader and IDC Leader Jeff Klein said, "At a time when middle class wages are stalling, child care costs are skyrocketing. Working families are forced to spend an average of \$11,960 per year, *per child*, on day care, without any real assistance. After paying for rent, commuting, and living expenses, how is the typical middle class family supposed to afford that? The answer is, they cannot. We are starting to see a lot more parents leave the workplace not because they want to, but because high day care costs are forcing them back home. That's no way to build a strong, diverse state job market and that's exactly why all of us in the Independent Democratic Conference are making working families our focus this year."

An IDC analysis found that thousands of families across the state are currently waiting for much-needed aid through the **NYS Child Care Block Grant**. Even though these families qualify for the financial help, funding for this crucial child day care subsidy program has decreased. **IDC members propose a restoration of \$82 million to the NYS Child Care Block Grant**, which would effectively help get these families off the waiting list.

Members of the **IDC are also championing \$100 million in additional funding for Facilitated Enrollment Child Care**. This subsidy is currently funded at \$7.3 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families monies that come through the Child Care Block Grant. Parents aided through this program pay a portion of their child's day care bill on a sliding scale of 10 to 35% of their income above the poverty line, which can sometimes equal 100% of child care costs. The IDC proposes capping the co-pay to 10% of overall household income and allowing families at 400% of the poverty level to be eligible for the subsidy. Under the IDC's plan, a family of four with a total household income of \$94,200 -- 400% of the poverty level -- would qualify for this type of subsidy.

"Almost half of the families in Rockland County could qualify for one of the two subsidies we're proposing today," said **Senator David Carlucci**. "Keeping New York affordable so that people can both work and raise a family here is fundamental to the vitality of our state.

That's why, if we're serious about making New York more affordable, we need to focus on the rising costs of day care."

"We cannot afford to leave our state's working families behind. Cuts to day care subsidies have forced thousands of working moms and dads to leave the workforce," said **Senator Diane Savino**. "This \$200 million in additional funding will help New York families thrive by providing them with the resources they need to pay for daycare and will give them the peace of mind they need each day when they leave home to go earn a paycheck."

The IDC child care proposal has already won wide support from workers and educators:

"Greater access to child care for New York City families is critical. Home day care providers care for and educate many of our city's most vulnerable children and prepare them to enter public school. We applaud the work that they do, as well as the IDC's proposal to give more families access to this critical service," said **United Federation of Teachers President Michael Mulgrew**.

"Providing all children, especially the most vulnerable, with high-quality child care can help give our youngest citizens a stronger start toward their education," said **NYSUT Executive Vice President Andrew Pallotta**. "If our goal is to end the achievement gap and ensure every child graduates and goes on to college or a good job in the workplace, there's no better place to start investing in our children than when they are very young."

"The Independent Democratic Conference's proposal to expand subsidies and access to child care is welcome news to hardworking families across our state," said **Mario Cilento, President of the New York State AFL-CIO**.

“Working is a necessity, not an option, for many parents. Unfortunately, countless New Yorkers are left without affordable avenues for quality child care while they’re at work. This hurts our families, businesses, and economy. The IDC’s legislation recognizes that an investment in child care is an investment in the education and development of our children, an investment in the productivity of our workforce, and an investment in our future,” **Cilento** added.

“In the seven years that Workforce Development Institute has been operating the Facilitated Child Care Enrollment Program, we have seen a steady increase in the demand for child care subsidies. The economic benefits are clear. Without this program, many working parents would be unable to work, resulting in greater unemployment and higher costs for *other* support. We thank the IDC for recognizing how essential this program is and proposing to expand it to serve more New Yorkers,” said **WDI Executive Director Ed Murphy**.

"Adequately funding child care and improving access to quality childcare for low-income families has both immediate and lasting economic and social impact. Child care subsidies offer stability of care and access that many lower income parents can't afford. This is the right choice for our families, economy, and our state," added **Danny Donohue, President of the Civil Service Employees Association**.

“We support the IDC’s proposed restoration of \$82 million in Child Care Block Grant funding and the expansion of the Facilitated Enrollment to \$100 million. Our members are in great need of affordable quality child care. We have single parent families and members who work on second or third shifts and need to have a safe place to leave their children. Affordable child care increases economic stability in our community,” read a statement from **District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO**, which represents over 120,000 public sector employees.

Deborah King, president of The New York Union Child Care Coalition, which was developed by the AFL-CIO and includes leading New York State unions such as: 1199 SEIU, United Federation of Teachers, Teamsters Local 237, DC37 AFSCME, Civil Service Employees Union, Transportation Workers Union, Retail Wholesale Department Store Union also embraced the proposal.

“We cannot have real economic development unless we support quality, accessible child care for working parents. We applaud the IDC for recommending the restoration of \$82 million in subsidies for working families and the expansion of the Facilitated Enrollment program which provides subsidies for families at slightly higher income levels. Child care costs in New York State are amongst the highest in the nation. The IDC’s proposal is a major step to providing support for working families so that they can be fully present at work knowing their children are in safe, quality care,” **King** said.

Kyle Miller, director of the Campus Fun and Learn Child Care Center, Inc., knows firsthand how hard it is for parents who share their stories of hardship. "I see many families struggling with the cost of child care, who are forced to choose substandard care, care that is detrimental to their children. These proposed funding increases will help families who otherwise would have no way to afford quality child care so that they can work with the secure knowledge that their children are being well educated and cared for," she said.

“At United Neighborhood Houses, New York City’s federation settlement houses and community centers, we hear every day from parents, teachers and community members about how important high quality child care is for New York’s families. We know, from the experience of our member agencies providing early childhood and after-school programs that parents need somewhere safe, nurturing and educational for their children during the workday and nothing prepares children for success later in life than a high quality early childhood education. Yet, finding affordable, high quality child care remains daunting for many New York families.

The investments proposed by the Senate Independent Democratic Conference including restoring \$82 million in child care subsidies, expanding facilitated enrollment to meet the needs of many more middle income families and creating a new child care tax credits will ensure that many more New York children and families have access to affordable, high quality child care,” said **Nancy Wackstein, Executive Director of United Neighborhood Houses**

The plan has been endorsed by **Winning Beginning NY**, a statewide coalition of 36 organizations working to inform policy makers and the public about the many benefits of early care and learning including home visiting, child care and Pre-K, think tanks and other education advocates.

"The increased investment in child care proposed by the Independent Democratic Conference rightly gives early care and learning the prominence it deserves in next year's budget. We are particularly appreciative that the IDC is including \$82 million in funding to the New York State Child Care Block Grant, and increased funding for facilitated enrollment. The restoration of child care funding to 2010-2011 levels is a core component of Winning Beginning's 2014-15 Executive Agenda. This investment will move New York closer to a comprehensive early learning system that promotes children's healthy social, emotional, cognitive and physical development and success in school and later life," read a statement from **Winning Beginning NY**.

David Voegle, Executive Director of The Early Care & Learning Council said, "The Early Care & Learning Council supports the restoration of \$82 million to the New York State Child Care Block Grant in order to meet the needs of families that have been enduring child care subsidy shortfall in recent years. Child care costs can often exceed the cost of housing and related household expenses for families, making access to child care subsidies a necessary mechanism to obtain quality care."