



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## Senator David Carlucci Kicks Off Poverty Hearings in Rockland

DAVID CARLUCCI July 31, 2015

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Senator David Carlucci (D – Rockland/Westchester), as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Social Services held the first of several hearings he will be hosting throughout New York State on poverty.

The hearing was held in Pearl River, where Senator Carlucci heard testimony from local and statewide providers of social services to examine the current system of supportive services in New York State. Senator Carlucci will be conducting a broad survey of the current social services system, examining issues related to ending the cycle of poverty. The goal of these

hearings is to identify where gaps in the current system exist, so the Committee on Social Services can better address these issues in the upcoming legislative session.

“I will be hosting hearings across the state, to understand how New York State can better address poverty,” **said Senator David Carlucci.** “Our goal is to equip individuals and families from rural, urban and suburban areas with the tools they need to bring them out of poverty, into the middle class. The experts that testify at these hearings will help us delve into the issues that have been stagnant for years with a fresh, new approach.

“Of most concern are the unmet needs of children and families,” said **Susan Sherwood, Commissioner of Rockland County Department of Social Services.** “For us it really is ‘kids first.’ We believe in and know we need early education, quality childcare, after-school programs, mentoring programs, enhanced educational, social and cultural opportunities for all kids--but particularly for those in our poorer communities whose parents can not provide as much on their own. But we also see such a great need for parental education and support, family counseling and again, a repeating refrain, family-focused mental health services. Programs that could interlace with Social Services and provide help to the families our Caseworkers are working with would

be a wonderful support. DSS should have the funds available to offer additional complementary support programs to the families that we are working with.”

“I strongly urge the members of the Social Services Committee to examine the shelter allowance structure and to take immediate action to increase the allowance so that the amount received by public assistance recipients for housing is reasonably related to the housing costs in Rockland County,” said **Alexander Bursztein, Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Rockland County, Inc.** “In Rockland County the Shelter Allowance for a family of four is four hundred and eighty eight dollars.”

"Homelessness in New York has nearly doubled in the last decade," **Steve Piaseki, Upstate Member Services Coordinator, Supportive Housing Network of New York.** New York State must end this crisis and invest in the most cost-effective strategy proven to solve homelessness for those with the greatest needs; supportive housing. We call on the State to work with NYC and other localities with large and growing homeless populations across NYS to create 35,000 units of supportive housing over the next ten years."