



Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

New York's child-serving workforce crisis is no longer a challenge confined to classrooms or child-care centers. It is a statewide workforce and economic issue—one that directly constrains participation, reduces productivity, and undermines the return on our public investments in education and human services.

New York data is clear:

- More than **16,500 children** were unable, last year, to attend child care due to staffing shortages. **56% of childcare programs** report staffing shortages.
- **Eighty-three percent of districts** report shortages in special education preschool services.
- More than **one in five teachers in high-poverty schools** is teaching outside their certification area.
- **And, One-third of the workforce is** eligible to retire within five years.

These numbers tell a clear story. This is not a temporary disruption. It is a **systemic labor market failure at scale**.

And it carries real economic consequences.

When child-care programs and schools lack qualified staff, parents reduce work hours or leave the workforce altogether. **Employers lose**. Economies weaken. And public investments fail to deliver their full return—ultimately leaving the next generation underprepared as the future workforce our traditional and emerging industries will need.

In effect, instability in the child-serving workforce has become a **hidden tax on New York's economy**—one we are paying for through costly crisis response—and one that will only grow more expensive without action.

So, we respectfully urge the Legislature to appropriate **\$50 million in the 2026–27 State Budget** to support the child-serving workforce with:

- Expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- Strategic retention models
- Streamlined credentialing
- Statewide technical assistance, and
- An intermediary model to engage employers across all 10 economic regions from the largest urban to the smallest rural.

This is not a short-term fix. It is **long-term workforce infrastructure—just as essential as transportation or broadband**.

And we know these strategies work.

Each child care provider or educator **we stabilize** supports dozens of families and enables hundreds of hours of work by those family members—**compounding** the economic benefit.

New York is uniquely positioned to scale this solution through **EDHUBNY**, which is leading a statewide coalition and since 2020 has bridged labor, education, and child-serving systems positioning New York to scale rapidly and responsibly.

We urge you to support **Bill A10196-A** to stabilize the child serving workforce and strengthen New York's economic future.

The legacy of your leadership—or the cost of inaction—will last for generations. We believe the choice is clear.

Thank you for your time and commitment to New York's workforce and communities.

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