



2021 ANNUAL
REPORT

NEW YORK STATE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES



SENATOR
ROXANNE J. PERSAUD
CHAIR

CHAIR
SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEES
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CITIES 1
DISABILITIES
LABOR
TRANSPORTATION

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE



SENATOR ROXANNE J. PERSAUD
19TH SENATE DISTRICT

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December 17, 2021

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President and Majority Leader
New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to transmit the Annual Report of the New York State Senate Standing Committee on Social Services (the Committee) for the 2021 Legislative Session. As Chair, I am proud to continue to lead our efforts to address important matters under my Committee's jurisdiction including, but not limited to, alleviation of poverty, assistance to survivors of domestic violence, services for disconnected youth, assistance for individuals with disabilities, workforce readiness and a vast network of services for vulnerable New Yorkers.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, the Committee met 4 times and reported 18 bills. The Committee also co-sponsored three joint public hearings. Oversight hearings were conducted on the Community Services Block Grant program administered by the NYS Department of State, and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) administered by the NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance (OTDA). The Committee also collaborated with the Agriculture and Labor committees to examine inequalities in food systems and the agriculture sector. Having participated in numerous agricultural tours throughout New York State, I've observed that a great deal of work lies ahead in bringing economic justice to underrepresented communities, but continued partnerships and collaboration will achieve significant change.

I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts and support of the work that we accomplished this year, and I thank you for the continued support from the Majority Conference in the Committee's operations. I look forward to continuing with our meaningful work in 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roxanne J. Persaud".

Roxanne J. Persaud

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT
NEW YORK STATE SENATE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES

Senator Roxanne J. Persaud, Chairperson

Committee Members

Senator Simcha Felder	Senator Alexis Weik
Senator Brian Kavanagh	Senator Sue Serino
Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie	
Senator José M. Serrano	

Committee Staff

Dennis Weakley, Committee Director
Tamara Frazier, Senior Counsel
Lahmar Louis, Senior Budget Analyst

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Social Services has legislative oversight responsibilities for issues concerning the alleviation of poverty, assistance to survivors of domestic violence, services for disconnected youth, assistance for individuals with disabilities, workforce readiness and a vast network of human services programs reaching vulnerable New Yorkers.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, 73 bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, 18 were reported from the Committee. 14 bills were passed by the Senate, 6 of which passed in both houses. This work was conducted through a series of 4 committee meetings. A list of all bills that were reported from the committee is provided at the end of this report.

In addition to its regular meetings, the Social Services Committee jointly sponsored three hearings:

- **Diversifying Agriculture and Addressing Food Justice alongside Continuing Inequalities on our Food Systems**
Joint public hearing in conjunction with the Senate Agriculture and Labor Committee
Date: April 13, 2021. Location: virtual
- **The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Program**
Joint public hearing in conjunction with the Senate Finance Committee, Assembly Social Services Committee and Assembly Governmental Operations Committee
Date: June 16, 2021. Location: virtual.
- **To Examine Implementation of the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program**
Joint public hearing in conjunction with the Senate Housing, Construction, & Community Development Committee.
Date: August 19, 2021. Location: St. Francis College, Brooklyn.

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The following key bills were acted on by the committee in 2021:

S64 (Persaud) Statewide SNAP Restaurant Meals Program. Under this new law, the NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance is directed to apply to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a waiver to operate a statewide restaurant meals program that will serve certain homeless, elderly and disabled New Yorkers. This legislation was signed to Chapter 430 of the Laws of 2021 on October 4, 2021.

S6195 (Persaud) Eliminating The “R” Word. This legislation would update various sections of the Social Services Law with appropriate references to people with developmental disabilities. The “R” word would be eliminated from the Social Services Law. S6195 passed the Senate and was delivered to the Assembly on May 24, 2021.

S856 Home Stability Support Program (Krueger). S856 would authorize a new Home Stability Support Program whereby eligible public assistance recipients and/or those facing an imminent loss of housing may receive a shelter supplement equal to 85% of the FMR along with funds for heating assistance to prevent eviction from their established home and thus eliminate the need to enter an emergency shelter. This program would be administered by each local social services district using state funds. S856 was reported to the Senate Finance Committee on January 25, 2021.

S6572 (Hinchey) No Cost Menstrual Hygiene Products in Homeless Shelters. This bill will require providers of temporary housing assistance to make sanitary napkins, panty liners, tampons and other feminine hygiene products available at no cost. A provider could be a family shelter, a shelter for adults, a hotel, an emergency apartment, a domestic violence shelter, a runaway and homeless youth shelter, or a safe house for refugees. This legislation was signed to Chapter 794 of the Laws of 2021 on December 22, 2021

TWO HOUSE BILLS

In 2021, six of the 73 bills referred to the Standing Committee on Social Services passed both houses of the Legislature. Five bills have been signed and one received a veto message.

Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Action
S64	Persaud	Establishes a Statewide Restaurant Meals Program as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.	Chapter 430, Laws of 2021.
S668	May	Relates to conciliation and non-compliance with public assistance employment; repealer	Veto Memo 59.
S672	Sanders	Relates to a civil cause of action for human trafficking; allows for actions relating to human trafficking to be commenced within fifteen years after the victimization has occurred.	Chapter 311, Laws of 2021.
S3223-A	Persaud	Allows persons applying for or receiving public assistance to be interviewed by phone at social services official's option.	Chapter 133, Laws of 2021.
S6572	Hinchey	Relates to providing feminine hygiene products at no cost to menstruating individuals receiving temporary housing assistance	Chapter 794, Laws of 2021.
S6696	Persaud	Extends provisions of law relating to the Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking	Chapter 227, Laws of 2021.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Significant Action
S64	Persaud	Establishes a Statewide Restaurant Meals Program as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.	Chapter 430, Laws of 2021.
S339	Persaud	Requires social services districts to maintain a waiting list of certain families applying for child care assistance.	Reported to Cal. No. 175.
S668	May	Relates to conciliation and non-compliance with public assistance employment; repealer	Veto Memo 59.
S672	Sanders	Relates to a civil cause of action for human trafficking; allows for actions relating to human trafficking to be commenced within fifteen years after the victimization has occurred.	Chapter 311, Laws of 2021.
S843	Gounardes	Authorizes certain shelters for victims of domestic violence to be reimbursed for any payment differential for housing a single individual in a room intended for double occupancy.	Reported to Finance
S856	Krueger	Relates to the creation of Home Stability Support Supplement programs.	Reported to Finance
S1812	Persaud	Relates to the creation of a self-sufficiency standard study regarding how much income is needed for a family of a given composition in a given geographic location to adequately meet its basic needs without public or private assistance.	Reported to Finance
S3178	Sanders	Relates to public notice of basic rights by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for applicants and recipients of public assistance.	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly
S3223-A	Persaud	Allows persons applying for or receiving public assistance to be interviewed by phone at social services official's option.	Chapter 133, Laws of 2021.

S4540-A	Rivera	Implements additional restrictions on actions to recover overpayment of certain assistance.	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly
S4692	Bailey	Provides supports and services for youth suffering from adverse childhood experiences.	Reported to Finance
S5574	Persaud	Relates to resource exemptions for applicants for public assistance programs	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly.
S5759-B	Brisport	Exempts certain income and resources provided to persons enrolled in certain pilot programs with direct cash transfers in determining eligibility for public assistance benefits.	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly.
S5940	Parker	Requires the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence to conduct a study on domestic violence in the transgender community with a focus on Black transgender women.	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly.
S6195	Persaud	Replaces certain instances of the term "mentally retarded" with the term "individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities".	Passed Senate, Delivered to Assembly.
S6572	Hinchey	Relates to providing feminine hygiene products at no cost to menstruating individuals receiving temporary housing assistance	Chapter 794, Laws of 2021.
S6589	Persaud	Exempts income earned by a head of household or any person in the household from certain job training programs from the determination of need for public assistance programs.	Reported to Senate Finance
S6696	Persaud	Extends provisions of law relating to the Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking	Chapter 227, Laws of 2021.



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