



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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Senate Democratic Majority Passes Pro-Child Care And Pro-Family Legislation

(Albany, NY) The Senate Democratic Majority today passed legislation to support New York families and protect children. The bills will promote flexible working arrangements, take steps towards meeting childcare needs in underserved communities, and protect children from a wide array of safety hazards that have caused preventable harm and deaths. Additionally, these bills will support children’s mental health and physical well-being by allowing licensed professionals to be hired at children’s summer camps and establishing the New York State Reuniting Families Act.

“The Senate Democratic Majority is taking major steps to help ensure safer conditions for New York children, especially in homes and daycare facilities,” **Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins** said. “During our first few months in the Senate Majority, we have made children’s safety a top priority and the bills passed today continue to advance that goal. I thank Chair of the Senate Committee on Children and Families, Senator Velmanette Montgomery, and the bill sponsors for their commitment to New York children’s safety and for advancing this important legislation.”

The package of legislation advanced by the Senate Majority includes:

- **Flexible Working Arrangements:** This bill, [S.3665](#), introduced by Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris, will give employees that right to request flexible working arrangements that meets the needs of both the employer and employee. However, this bill would not make flexible working arrangements in the workplace a requirement, but instead would give employees the right to request flexible working arrangements and employers the right to reject such requests. This legislation also prohibits employers from retaliating against employees for exercising this right.
- **Child Care Availability Study:** This bill, [S.753A](#), sponsored by Chair of the Senate Committee on Children and Families Senator Velmanette Montgomery will direct the Office of Children and Family Services to study and make recommendations on the availability of child day care and childcare assistance, and determine the unmet need of childcare subsidies across the state.
- **Child Care Expenses:** This bill, [S.2680](#), sponsored by Senator Shelley Mayer will allow candidates for state and local office within New York State to use campaign funds for any childcare expenses incurred as a direct result of their candidacy.
- **Brendan’s Law:** This bill, [S.3186](#), sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy, requires child day care centers, public institutions for children and certain other facilities installing new or replacement window coverings to install cordless window coverings.
- **Summer Camp Staffing:** This bill, [S.3834](#), introduced by Senator Jen Metzger, will allow summer camps to hire licensed social workers, physical therapists, psychologists, athletic trainers, mental health care professionals, occupational therapists and other licensed professionals to provide services for children summer camps and camps for children with developmental disabilities.

- **Banning of Crib Bumper Pads:** [S.3788](#), sponsored by Senator David Carlucci, will restrict the sale and use of crib bumper pads under certain circumstances. This bill will prevent the deaths of and serious injury to infants, which have been attributed to the use of crib bumper pads.
- **Unsecured Furniture:** This bill, [S.3563A](#), introduced by Senator Jose Serrano, requires child day care centers to anchor all furniture and electronics that are located in the facility. Essentially this bill will protect children at childcare centers from tipping of unsecured furniture.
- **New York State Reuniting Families Act:** This bill, [S.5024A](#), sponsored by Senator Kevin Parker, establishes the “New York State Reuniting Families Act” that will enable foster care children to rejoin their families and ultimately exit the public welfare system. It will also ensure that separated families receive appropriate care and due process.
- **Window Blind Safety:** This bill, [S.4181](#), introduced by Senator Julia Salazar, will require that information be made available to parents regarding window blind safety the potential fatal consequences from strangulation posed by window blinds
- **Childcare Accessibility Study:** This bill, [S.5690](#), sponsored by Senator James Sanders Jr., directs Empire State Development to study the impact of childcare facilities in economically distressed areas and to develop strategies to expand access to childcare services.

Senate Deputy Leader and Bill Sponsor, Senator Michael Gianaris said, “New York State must do more to help working families. Many businesses already take the steps outlined in my proposal and it’s time others follow their lead. Adjusting someone’s work schedule to accommodate caring for an aging parent, schoolchildren, or medical appointments is both fair and productive. I look forward to this bill becoming law.”

Chair of the Senate Committee on Children and Families and Bill Sponsor, Senator Velmanette Montgomery said, "Childcare is a huge but necessary expense for families. Access to quality childcare gives our children a valuable head start, allows parents to work and contribute to the economy, and employs an industry of providers across our state. It is extremely important that we examine how our families are being served by the current childcare system and where there is room for improvement."

Bill Sponsor, Senator David Carlucci said, “Legislation I sponsor to ban crib bumpers is about preventing infant deaths. We know these accessories are not safe and yet they are still marketed to parents as a matching nursery accessory. It’s time we ban their sale in New York State and stop further tragedies.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator Tim Kennedy said, “Prioritizing our children’s safety has been the primary force driving this bill forward, and I’m grateful that the Senate has passed this important reform. When parents entrust day cares and other facilities with the supervision of their children, they deserve to have the peace of mind and know that they are safe. Through this bill, we are ensuring these public agencies caring for children are updating or replacing blinds when they perform maintenance or schedule renovations.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator Shelley Mayer said, “I am thrilled that my bill allowing state and local candidates to use campaign funds for childcare expenses incurred as a direct result of their candidacy passed the Senate today and will now be codified into state law. We need more young people, young mothers and fathers, running for public office. We need their voices and experiences represented in local and state government. Childcare costs are already too burdensome for many households, and these costs should not be prohibit qualified candidates from running for public office. Thank you to former Congressional candidate Liuba Grechen Shirley for her leadership on this important issue.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator Jen Metzger said, “This bill recognizes that summer camp is an important time of transition and emotional development for many children and that children’s physical and mental health needs are not seasonal. It allows summer camps, including camps for children with developmental disabilities and for children who have experienced trauma, to hire social workers, health care providers, and other licensed professionals to provide the full range of services that kids may need in order to thrive. At a time when we are

increasingly aware of the long-term impacts of physical and emotional trauma on children, it's important that children who need services have access to trained professionals while at summer camp."

Bill Sponsor, Senator Kevin Parker said, "When our immigration policies collide with our public welfare programs and harm children, we have a problem. At the federal level, we can see these systems are broken and need to be fixed. Keeping families together is important and separated families deserve care and compassion. This the land of opportunity and due process, I am proud to sponsor legislation that makes that clear."

Senator Gustavo Rivera said, "The Senate Majority Conference is strongly committed to providing New York parents and their children the resources and services they need to thrive. This legislative package will ensure our State helps parents build a solid support system that will enable them to raise their children in a safe environment."

Bill Sponsor, Senator Jose M. Serrano said, "On average, a child dies every ten days after suffering an accident with a falling television or piece of furniture, devastatingly changing families forever. These preventable tragedies can be avoided by taking simple, low-cost precautions to ensure our children's safety. Today's actions will give parents piece of mind by requiring all childcare facilities in the state to anchor down furniture and electronics, protecting our youngest New Yorkers."

Bill Sponsor, Senator Julia Salazar said, "Between the years of 1990 to 2015, there have been an estimated 16,827 child deaths in the United States related to cord entanglements on window blinds according to the Journal, Pediatrics. This common-sense bill would make consumers aware of the child-dangers related to window blinds thereby aiming to prevent deaths. I'm honored to lead-sponsor this bill (S4180)."

Bill Sponsor, Senator James Sanders, Jr. said, "Early childhood care plays an important role in a youth's development and provides valuable support to families with young children. This legislation will help us understand how to create and expand these services so that more New Yorkers can benefit."

Senator Pete Harckham said, "Access to quality, affordable childcare is critical for families on the margins so they can continue to work and contribute to our economy. That is why the childcare focused bills we are supporting today are so important. Studies show that without access to affordable childcare, some families cannot work at all and end up utilizing expensive government support services."

Senator Roxanne Persaud said, "The well-being and protection of our families and children should always be a priority. I am pleased that my colleagues in the Senate have proposed legislation that supports these goals. We must strive towards providing safer environments for our children and care and support to the households of New York in need."

Senator Neil Breslin said, "The legislative package passed by the Senate today exemplifies the steps we are taking to protect one of our most vulnerable populations: our children. We have passed measures to address cordless blind and window safety, restrict the use of crib bumper pads, and have established the 'New York State Reuniting Families Act' which enables foster care children to rejoin their families."

Senator Jim Gaughran said, "This package of bills includes major advancements that will go a long way towards supporting New York families -- including important safety protections for children like banning crib bumpers and ensuring child day care centers are safe. Today, substantial boundaries still exist for working parents looking to run for office. I am proud that this package of bills also makes tremendous advancements -- including landmark legislation by my colleague Senator Mayer -- that will allow campaign funds to be used for childcare. As this Democratic Majority fights to make government more representative of the people we represent, this bill will allow countless parents to step up, come forward, and run for office."

Senator Rachel May said, “Children and families in New York deserve all the protections and resources we can provide. This package of bills provides resources to reinforce the programs and solutions that we know work and further demonstrates our commitment to addressing the challenges families face when seeking childcare arrangements. Thank you to my colleagues for their advocacy on these issues.”

Senator Kevin Thomas said, “The health of our communities is dependent on the health of our families. It is our responsibility as citizens and lawmakers to ensure that our children grow up healthy and safe, and that our families have access to the resources they need. This package of bills serves to protect children and empower New York families by expanding access to childcare services.”

Senator Alessandra Biaggi said, "Any way that the state can protect children from harm, provide resources for their development, and support the success of families must be prioritized. The wellbeing of New York's children and families must always be at the forefront of our minds and put into action.”

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