



THE LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

## **Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Falls Short on Child Care**

### ***New York State Legislators call Governor Hochul's executive budget proposals on child care insufficient.***

We, legislators representing every corner of New York State, are disappointed by Governor Hochul's Executive Budget proposals, which fall short of meeting the needs of New York's children, families, and child care providers.

We join the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, representing more than eighty organizations, including provider networks, parent groups, unions, and child care policy and advocacy groups, in calling upon policymakers to include transformative child care proposals and bold investments in the 2022-23 Enacted Budget.

Specifically, we echo their call that the final budget must include a meaningful investment of **\$5 billion** that would enable New York to take critical steps toward achieving universal child care. The investments must do three things to guard against destabilizing the child care sector or inadvertently harming New York families as we transition to universal:

**1. Expand child care subsidies to all children infant to school age—regardless of employment or immigration status or any other factor, prioritizing low income families and families struggling with unemployment, homelessness, disability, and other challenges.**

New York needs to quickly develop its capacity and establish a system of universal child care within the next four years. However, Governor Hochul's Executive Budget proposal falls far short of this goal, and only proposes to expand access to child care to New York families earning less than 300% of the federal poverty level, within a span of three years. This is not a strong start, and does not come close to universal child care. The Governor's proposal also preserves the child care subsidy system's maze of rules that creates burdensome obstacles to access. The Governor's proposed expansion – even after it is fully phased in – would still exclude many families in need of support including immigrant families, families involved in the child welfare system, families experiencing homelessness, parents with disabilities, parents experiencing unemployment, and foster families. **New York needs to make far more expansive investments into child care subsidies, and to commit to building a truly universal system over the next four years, including a \$3 billion investment this year to guarantee subsidies to child care to a much larger population.**

## **2. Significantly raise child care workforce compensation & invest in growing our child care sector**

A majority of New York parents currently already live in child care deserts where they face impossibly long waitlists or commutes to access care, and availability of child care programs continues to diminish.

Where child care is still available, it is largely due to a workforce overwhelmingly made up of women—especially Black women and women of color—who are so undercompensated for this vital work that the majority live in poverty. In addition to being fundamentally unjust, this dramatic undercompensation has contributed to a massive shortage of child care workers. The Executive Budget proposal, however, only calls for \$75 million in federal stimulus funds to support the child care workforce. This number falls far short of meeting the significant and ongoing need to protect and grow this workforce. New York should establish a \$1 billion workforce compensation program to raise child care worker wages without raising child care costs for working families. New York could draw upon the full \$200 million in federal child care stabilization funds it has on hand now to support this fund for the short term while the State pursues a long-term strategy to raise child care workforce salaries.

Additionally, expanding towards a truly universal system of child care will require \$400 million to develop and build out New York State's child care infrastructure to provide care for underserved populations like parents who work night shifts.

## **3. Increase child care provider reimbursement rates to reflect the true cost of care and significantly build out New York's child care infrastructure**

The current model that New York uses for compensating child care workers is broken, and needs to be fundamentally restructured. Current subsidy rates are far lower than the actual cost of providing child care. However, the Executive Budget proposal to invest \$125 million to increase child care subsidy reimbursement rates is unlikely to do more than enable subsidy reimbursements to stay steady with rising costs. A functional subsidy system will require \$600 million to transition to a new funding mechanism that pays for the true cost of care, rather than simply maintaining the status quo.

We stand by as members of the legislature to fight for a final budget that includes these provisions, leading New York boldly into 2022 with relief rolled out on a short timeline responsive to the urgency of the crisis, in a manner that enables New York to build universal child care. A failure to meaningfully invest in child care ignores the urgent needs of the state's economy struggling with severe staff shortages that are partially due to the lack of access to affordable child care. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Governor to make the final budget one that adequately meets the needs of New York's parents and children and finally gives child care providers and the child care workforce what they deserve and have been deprived of for decades.

Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi  
Chair, Children and Families Committee

Senator Jabari Brisport  
Chair, Children and Families Committee

Assemblywoman Sarah Clark, AD 136  
Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages, AD 22  
Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, AD 81  
Assemblywoman Phara Souffrant Forrest, AD 57  
Assemblyman Kenny Burgos, AD 85  
Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon, AD 52  
Assemblywoman Marcela Mitaynes, AD 51  
Assemblywoman Emily Gallagher, AD 50  
Assemblyman John T. McDonald III, AD 108  
Assemblyman Fred Thiele, AD 1  
Assemblyman Al Stirpe, AD 127  
Assemblyman Joseph P. DeStefano, AD 3  
Assemblyman Dan Quart, AD 73  
Assemblywoman Catalina Cruz, AD 39  
Assemblywoman Yudelka Tapia, AD 86  
Assemblyman Harry Bronson, AD 138  
Assemblyman Chris Burdick, AD 93  
Assemblywoman Karines Reyes, AD 87  
Assemblywoman Jen Lunsford, AD 135  
Assemblyman Harvey Epstein, AD 74  
Assemblywoman Rebecca Seawright, AD 76  
Assemblywoman Anna Kelles, AD 125  
Assemblyman William Magnarelli, AD 129  
Assemblywoman Mathylde Frontus, AD 46  
Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal, AD 67  
Assemblyman Brian Manktelow, AD 130  
Assemblywoman Judy Griffin, AD 21  
Assemblyman Steve Otis, AD 91  
Assemblyman Angelo Morinello, AD 145  
Assemblyman Robert Carroll, AD 44

Senator Jessica Ramos, SD 13  
Senator Jamaal Bailey, SD 36  
Senator Alessandra Biaggi, SD 34  
Senator Samra Brouk, SD 55  
Senator Cordell Cleare, SD 30  
Senator Leroy Comrie, SD 14  
Senator Andrew Gounardes, SD 22  
Senator Michelle Hinchey, SD 46  
Senator Brad Hoylman, SD 27  
Senator John Liu, SD 11  
Senator Rachel May, SD 53  
Senator Julia Salazar, SD 18  
Senator Sean Ryan, SD 60  
Senator Gustavo Rivera, SD 33  
Senator Robert Jackson, SD 31