



Empire State Campaign for Child Care

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Legislators Urge Governor: Release Child Care COVID-19 Plan

More than five weeks after New York closed all public schools, and began shutting down most businesses, many essential workers across the State are struggling to find necessary, affordable child care. Many child care educators, themselves essential workers, are still without protective equipment and clear guidance on how to care safely for children – who do not social distance. Three weeks ago, the federal government passed the CARES Act, including over \$160 million for child care.

Yet Governor Cuomo, who has demonstrated such leadership in the face of this unprecedented crisis, has not released a comprehensive emergency child care plan – one that ensures essential workers have safe, affordable care during the pandemic, and that ensures the survival of the fragile child care industry so that it is there to support the post-pandemic economic recovery.

It is essential that Governor Cuomo immediately release a plan, and invest the federal CARES Act funds. Every day New York delays, essential workers face child care challenges, child care providers and families are in danger of getting sick, and more providers close their doors for good.

The chairs of both the Senate and Assembly Social Services Committees (Senator Roxanne Persaud and Assemblymember Andy Hevesi) and the Senate and Assembly Children and Families Committees (Senator Velmanette Montgomery and Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee) sent a letter to the Governor earlier this week, urging the Governor to take action. Today, a bi-partisan, bi-cameral letter was sent to him, signed by an additional 33 members.

Child care is a necessary support in normal times. Without access to high-quality care, parents cannot work—it's as simple as that. Our economy cannot restart without sufficient child care capacity. When additional parents are allowed to return to work – very likely before schools and camps reopen - they will need care. Unfortunately, this sector was struggling pre-pandemic. Many of the providers that have closed in the face of the virus are uncertain that they will have the means to re-open.

The Governor must use the CARES Act federal funding immediately to ensure that New York State essential employees can keep working—and that all families can get back to work when the State re-opens.