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Action Must Follow First Convening of Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council

The Executive Office will convene the Advisory Council in Albany on October 13. It is the first meeting since Governor Hochul signed the Child Poverty Reduction Act into law in December 2021.

On October 13, 2022, Governor Hochul’s office will convene the New York State Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council for the first time. The New York State Child Poverty Reduction Act was signed into law in December after passing both houses of the New York State legislature in June 2021.

The Child Poverty Reduction Act makes a bold and necessary commitment to the actions required to reduce child poverty in the state by 50% by 2033, and the Council’s convening is a critical first step.

Child Poverty Reduction is a Bipartisan Priority

For too long, New York has allowed hundreds of thousands of children to endure the hardships of poverty—in times of recession, and in times of plenty. In New York State last year, 747,000 children were living in poverty, representing 19% of all New York children, with that percentage a full 9 points higher for Black children, and 7 points higher for Latino children.

In 2021, NYS legislators made it clear that it was past time to firmly commit to doing better for New York’s children. That year, The Child Poverty Reduction Act, spearheaded by Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, swept through the NYS Legislature. The Act had near-unanimous support from upstate and downstate, rural, urban, and suburban legislators and constituents, as well as having bipartisan co-sponsorship.

The time to solve New York’s child poverty problem is now. Governor Hochul has stated that child poverty reduction is a priority of her administration, and the coming year’s State budget will be the time to put that broad commitment into action.

First Advisory Council Meeting: A Step Toward Action

The Advisory Council’s first meeting is an important step toward meaningful, concrete action, and Schuyler Center applauds Governor Hochul for convening this initial group of dedicated policy advocates, service providers, community members, and NYS agency leaders.

Working toward a significant reduction in New York’s child poverty rate will require that New Yorkers with lived experience participate in the conversation. Centering New Yorkers who have been impacted by poverty is essential to putting the right solutions in place.

1 Data source: Kids Count Data Center. Children in poverty by race and ethnicity in New York.
As advocates for poverty-fighting public policy, Schuyler Center is eager to work alongside the Advisory Council on concrete and transformative action, designed with the intention to reduce child poverty and its racial inequity. Our children deserve more than talk and empty promises, and the need for action is urgent.

“By enacting The Child Poverty Reduction Act, Governor Hochul boldly set the expectation that New York State will intentionally, significantly, and consistently cut child poverty, year over year,” said Kate Breslin, Schuyler Center President and CEO and Advisory Council appointee. “Beyond that, and just as important, the law holds policymakers publicly accountable for whether and how policy and budget decisions affect children living in poverty. The Child Poverty Reduction Act creates the roadmap to a future in which New York is deliberate about reducing child poverty and addressing inequity. I am eager to get to work alongside other members of the Advisory Council.”

The Data is Clear: The Right Policies Make a Dramatic Difference

Recent data has illustrated the wide-reaching impact of poverty-fighting public policy. We are in a new era of knowing for certain which policies work, and how transformative the right investments can be for families at or below the poverty line. We also know how damaging it can be when support runs out, and when powerful tools are underused.

The Child Poverty Reduction Act puts New York State on the right path to implementing the most effective policies, and the Advisory Council can lead the way.

New York has long been a nationwide leader in family-centered policies, and now is the time to ensure an equitable and sustained pandemic recovery that prioritizes support for New York’s children and families - now and into the future. Every child in the state, in every neighborhood in the state, should have the opportunity to thrive. If we take decisive action to put the right policies in place, they will.

“New York State is home to cities with some of the highest child poverty rates in the country, and that is why the work of the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council will be absolutely crucial in supporting families on the path to a better future,” said Dia Bryant, Executive Director of The Education Trust – NY and Advisory Council appointee. “Now more than ever, as communities continue to feel the toll of the ongoing pandemic and inflation, we need to act swiftly to advance policies that will help lift families with young children out of poverty. The future of our children, communities, and state depends on it.”

“New York State has made a bold, nationally-leading commitment to cut child poverty in half in 11 years,” said Pete Nabozny, Policy Director of The Children’s Agenda and appointee to the Advisory Council. “Fulfilling our commitment requires that we take similarly bold and nationally-leading actions in state public policy and budgeting, starting in 2023. The fact that nearly one out of every two children in Rochester live in poverty today, a rate amongst the highest in the country, is due to current policy choices. We are grateful to Governor Hochul and the Child Poverty Reduction Act’s chief Assembly sponsor, Harry Bronson, for setting us on a course to make different choices. We can’t afford to waste another month, another year, or another child’s future.”

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Media Contact:
Nicole Correia, Director of Communications
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
n correia@scaany.org | (518) 463-1896 x131