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**Wins for Families in This Year's Budget Threatened by Failure to Permanently Invest in Child Care Workforce**

ALBANY, NY (May 2, 2023) – The Empire State Campaign for Child Care had three goals for this year's state budget – address the critical child care workforce shortage, equitably extend child care assistance eligibility to more families, and remove unnecessary barriers that prevent families from receiving the support they need to thrive. Because of the passionate advocacy of our members from across New York State, and the tireless efforts of many legislative champions, significant strides were made in all three categories in the final budget.

Governor Hochul has demonstrated that she intimately understands how important it is for New York's families, especially New York's mothers, to have the child care they need. The wins this budget contains for families underscore her commitment to improving our child care system for parents across the state. These include: extending eligibility for assistance to pay for child care to families earning up to 85% of the state median income (\$93,258 for a family of four), capping copays, the development of an online application, and the elimination of some administrative barriers that prevent families from receiving the help they need. Crucially, this budget also contains a small pilot program to help the families of children who are currently excluded due to their immigration status access child care. These measures will make a tangible difference in the lives of children and families.

Child care educators keep our state working while they empower, nurture, and teach our youngest children – even as they themselves endure the immense strain of economic insecurity. Every year that child care remains one of the lowest paying occupations in New York State is another year that passionate educators will continue to leave in droves, with those who stay unable to provide enough of the care that families need and the high quality early education our children deserve. A \$500M temporary workforce compensation fund, while an important investment, is insufficient without a commitment to permanently raise pay for child care educators. Instead, it serves as yet another bandaid for a sector desperate for long term solutions. As our [workforce shortage survey](#) demonstrated, **eligibility expansions remain an empty promise to families when they cannot find an opening in a child care program that meets their needs.**

We would like to thank Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for her continued leadership and understanding that New York's child care system can't meet the needs of children and families



without investing directly in the workforce that makes it possible. We are grateful that Governor Hochul and Speaker Heastie followed the lead of the Senate to invest additional state funds in workforce compensation and retention. We would also like to thank our champions and chairs of the Children and Families committees, Senator Brisport and Assemblyman Hevesi, for their partnership in advancing universal child care in each budget, and Senator Ramos, Chair of the Senate Committee on Labor, for her leadership in ensuring that all of New York's children are able to receive the child care assistance their families need.

The Empire State Campaign for Child Care believes that in a state as wealthy as New York, no family should go without the basic need of child care being met, and no child care educator should live in poverty. We will continue fighting for a high-quality, free, equitable, and universal child care system that meets the needs of all children and families and pays child care programs the true cost of care with a thriving wage and benefits. We look forward to building on this progress in the remainder of the [legislative session](#).