



For Immediate Release | January 10, 2025

Media Contact: Shoshana Herskowitz, shershkowitz@empirestatechildcare.org;

STATEMENT FROM THE EMPIRE STATE CAMPAIGN FOR CHILD CARE ON GOVERNOR HOCHUL'S PROPOSALS TO STRENGTHEN CHILD CARE

The Empire State Campaign for Child Care has advocated for a statewide universal child care system, where child care and early childhood education are treated as a public good rather than a private, family burden. We welcome the Governor's continued attention to child care, and were thrilled to hear the Governor restate during her January 8, 2025 announcement her ongoing commitment to achieving universal child care in New York.

While we must wait for more details about the child care State of State proposals, we are excited about the potential for the proposal to create a child care coalition of business and union representatives to be transformational. We understand this proposal to mean that a small group of business and union leaders, child care providers, and policy experts will be empowered to develop one or more recommendations for raising public funds to make universal child care a reality in New York State. **If this group is directed to be bold, and to develop a funding plan ambitious enough to support universal child care, this could mark the moment New York's goal of universal child care moves from vision to reality.**

"I am hopeful that the Governor's proposal to convene a coalition with business and union leaders to recommend ways to fund child care expansions will position New York to begin implementing universal child care in earnest next year," said **Dede Hill, Director of Policy, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy and appointee to the Governor's Child Care Availability Task Force.** "Notably, on the same day as this announcement, the Governor transmitted the CCATF's final report – A Roadmap to Universal Child Care – to the Legislature. To implement the components of the roadmap will require robust, sustained public investment. Let's follow the lead of states like Vermont, New Mexico, Washington D.C., that are already raising significant public funds which are being invested in lowering child care costs for families, raising wages for the child care workforce, enhancing program quality, and building needed facilities - actions that have already taken them well down the road to universal child care."

"As plans are rolled out for making child care accessible for every family, compensation for the child care workforce must be prioritized. We cannot improve access for families without fair compensation for the early childhood workforce." said **Shoshana Herskowitz, Campaign Manager for the Empire State Campaign for Child Care.** "We look forward to working with the Governor and other legislative leaders to establish a permanent fund to increase the compensation of the child care workforce, along with our other top policy priorities for 2025."

"As we prepare to enter an uncertain era with the new federal administration, we need our state to be unequivocal in its actions to protect children's lives and future. The announcement made by the governor earlier this week is a small positive step, which needs a much bolder investment in the workforce to make a meaningful impact for children, families and the child care community. Such bold action is long overdue," **said Marina Marcou O'Malley, Co-Executive Director of the Alliance for Quality Education.**

"Child care is the foundation of a thriving community and economy. The Governor's proposed \$110 million investment is an opportunity to strengthen that foundation, but it must be the beginning of a larger, ongoing commitment to universal, accessible, and affordable care for every family. Staffing shortages shouldn't mean parents have to scramble for care or programs have to close. A substitute pool can help ensure continuity of care, but its success will depend on how it's implemented and who gets a seat at the table in designing it. We don't need more time to study the problem—we need action. The CCATF Roadmap lays out solutions that can be implemented now, and it's critical that we move forward without delay.", said **Gladys Jones, founder and CEO of ECE on the Move and appointee to the Governor's Child Care Availability Task Force.**

"It is a main ingredient to have a Governor who is a mother and understands the vital necessity of child care to our children, families, workforce, and economy. We applaud Governor Hochul's call to increase and expand capacity of both center-based and resident-based child care programs. The Governor also acknowledged that we cannot achieve more affordable and accessible child care if teacher shortages continue due to low wages and benefits. Finally, creating a coalition to identify the means to fund universal child care sends a strong message that she is vested in equity, diversity, inclusion and justice for all, especially our children," said **Vonetta T. Rhodes, Executive Director of the Western New York Child Care Action Team and appointee to the Governor's Child Care Availability Task Force**

Empire State Campaign for Child Care is a statewide campaign dedicated to achieving universal child care in New York State. Founded in 2017, ESCCC counts in its membership over 100 organizations, along with hundreds of parents and child care providers from every corner of New York State.