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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Children and Families Committee Chair Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, Mom Squad, 38 Assemblymembers, Empire State Campaign for Child Care, Raising NY call on Governor Hochul "Do Not Close Down Budget Negotiations: Child Care Funding Shortfall to Impact Thousands of NYS Families"

Tens of thousands of New York families are on the brink of losing access to childcare under the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), no funding for child care workers

Albany, NY- A bipartisan coalition of 38 Assemblymembers were joined Wednesday afternoon by members of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care (ESCCC) and Raising NY to call for budget negotiations to stay open until at least $1 billion for child care over what was proposed in the Executive Budget (of which, at least $500 million should be invested in child care assistance (vouchers), and $500 million for workforce) is included in the final budget.

At least $1 billion is needed to prevent thousands of New York families from losing child care assistance and to begin to address the child care workforce shortage to ensure programs can operate at full licensed capacity to meet growing need.

In New York City, as many as 4,000 to 7,000 families a month could be denied continued care as

they come up for recertification. Thousands of new applicants will simply be turned away. The denials could begin as early as April 2025. Approximately 60,000 children will lose their childcare vouchers over the next fiscal year absent a significant infusion of new funding. The reimposition of work requirements for cash assistance recipients, coupled with an increase in voucher rates, has set the stage for a looming crisis that threatens the stability of New York City families, businesses, and communities. Without intervention - an even larger number of families than the enrollment in Universal Pre-K will be left without childcare in the year ahead - a devastating setback for working families.

However, this is not just an NYC issue, 7 counties have already closed enrollment and begun to turn families away: Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Madison, Saratoga, Warren and Washington. Three more are expecting to close enrollment in April. Every day, more are added to the list. These families suddenly must come up with an extra $1500 a month - or more, to cover the costs of child care themselves, piece together a child care arrangement with friends or family, or drop out of the workforce.

Parents directly impacted by this shortfall share their perspective:

"New York has made gains in the past few years in the area of child care including expanding access to child care and raising the market rate for providers. However, despite these changes, I will likely not be able to return to work from maternity leave full-time due to a lack of providers in my area. If additional funding for child care is not provided, many more families will be in a similar position to me. We need to continue to make forward, not backward, progress." -Julia Day

"It has been brought to our attention that NYC is in jeopardy of limiting child care assistance. It is frightening to imagine the multitude of children and parents negatively affected by this. As a parent with a significantly lower income, I heavily rely on child care assistance. If it were not for the support given to families like mine, many parents would not be able to afford child care, meaning it could make it impossible to maintain employment. There are so many benefits to families receiving assistance with child care. Children benefit from supervision, in both their social and academic development. I sure hope the necessary implementations will be made to ensure New York State's continued commitment to children and their families."-Merowe Nubyhan

"As a foster parent, I operate under strict regulations regarding who can supervise our foster child. Unlike typical families, we cannot simply rely on friends or relatives for child care unless they too are licensed foster parents. Even short-term child care disruptions (less than one week) create significant hardships, forcing me to either work from home while simultaneously caring for a high-needs child whose routine is disrupted, or request that already-overwhelmed caseworkers provide supervision in their offices. These child care gaps place additional strain on an already burdened system. In the case of long-term childcare disruptions, we would be forced

to surrender our foster child. This would require caseworkers to secure another suitable placement—either in a different community or with a family that has a stay-at-home parent—resulting in yet another traumatic disruption for an already vulnerable child."–Erica Thompson, Ed.D

"As a mother who relied on child care during the early stages of my son's life, child care is needed. Without this, parents are unable to work to provide the things that our children need. I have a child who is on the spectrum and outside of needing child care for me to work, him being in daycare/ preschool assisted with his growth and development." -Krystal Hardy

Looking ahead to the next federal fiscal year (October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026) – the period covered by the CCAP funds included in the 2025-26 NYS Budget – it is anticipated that nearly every county in the state will run short of CCAP funds at some point during that period if funding for the program is level with last year, as proposed in the Governor's budget. This is anticipated because program enrollment is steadily rising around the state due to expanded income eligibility limits, making tens of thousands New York families newly eligible for child care assistance, and in 2024, CCAP reimbursement rates to providers were increased.

This crisis is compounded by the lack of sustained investment in the child care workforce. If no funding is added before the budget is finalized, this will be the first time since the pandemic that there are no funds for the child care workforce – amounting to a pay cut.

While the legislature was only recently made aware of this looming crisis, there is still time for action. Failing to fill this budget shortfall, will be failing tens of thousands of New Yorkers and abandoning families in need.

"Under current leadership, our state has made historic investments in child care that have improved access and affordability, we cannot allow that progress to be undone. In fact, the rapid growth at which families were able to access vouchers is a big contributing factor to this budget shortfall. Our answer to this problem cannot be to abandon these families but rather to increase the funding to maintain current vouchers, expand vouchers to every eligible family, and provide a sustained investment in the child care workforce," **said Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, Chair Children and Families Committee**

"The Governor's desire to preserve tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires should not be more important than funding child care. We all have to step up and fight for this. Without increased child care worker funding and voucher funding, child care assistance expansion is a hollow promise" **said Sen. Jabari Brisport, Chair of the Senate Children & Families Committee.**

"Child care is not a luxury—it's a necessity for working families across New York. If we don't act now, thousands of families will be left without the support they rely on, forcing parents out of the workforce and closing childcare centers. We cannot allow this crisis to continue. I urge the

Governor and my colleagues to prioritize real funding solutions to keep families afloat and ensure children receive the care they deserve," **said Assemblyman Brian Maher**

"For four years I have fought hard here in Albany to stabilize and improve the childcare ecosystem. To date we have seen some successes in the budget with historic investments along with common sense legislative wins. We have expanded income eligibility for families to qualify for help and increased the rate we pay our childcare providers. Most importantly our statewide Childcare Availability Task Force has released a report giving us the roadmap to universal childcare. But in recent weeks we have discovered underfunding in our childcare assistance program (CCAP) has put so much of this good work in jeopardy. Money is running out. New York City and counties across the state have already stopped taking new applications and families currently receiving subsidies may not be able to recertify in the coming months. And our already struggling childcare workforce is on the brink of a pay cut. It is critical that our final budget include an additional $500 million for CCAP as well as an additional $500 million to be invested in the childcare workforce. The alarm is ringing loudly, as a state, we cannot afford to take a step back in the progress we have made. Now is the time to act," **said Assemblywoman Sarah Clark**

"As a Member of the Committee of Children and Families, a former Childcare Provider and a mother of four children representing Assembly District 58, I know first-hand just how important childcare investments are to everyday families. We are closing in on the New York State Budget, but cannot do so, without prioritizing affordable and accessible childcare for our children and workforce support," **said Assemblywoman Monique Chandler-Waterman.** "I stand with my community caretakers and colleagues to ensure at least $1 billion dollar in investments are allocated into the New York Executive Budget. We should not have to choose between a high quality childcare program and workforce support. This critical funding will ensure that our children and families have a real opportunity to thrive."

"It's no secret: New Yorkers are leaving because they can't afford to raise a family here, and the skyrocketing cost of child care is at the center of that exodus," said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes.** "As the father of young children, I understand this challenge deeply. If we want New York to be a place where families can put down roots and thrive, where communities are safe and stable, we cannot ignore this problem. We need to invest in child care assistance and workforce support so we can build the robust care network our families need and deserve."

"NYS has made critical progress in expanding child care access, but that progress is now at risk. Without immediate action, thousands of families will lose or be denied child care assistance each month, forcing parents to make impossible choices and pushing providers out of business. Counties across the state are already closing enrollment, and more are on the brink. We can't allow New York's working families and children to be left behind. We urge the Governor and our colleagues to keep the budget open until additional funding is secured to protect child care assistance and support the workforce needed to keep programs running," **said Assemblywoman Amy Paulin.**

"When tens of thousands of families are at risk of losing child care, we need to act and act swiftly," **said Assemblymember Gabriella A. Romero (D,WF-Albany, Guilderland, New Scotland).** "Parents depend on the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to access daycare and child care programs. If thousands of families are kicked off this CCAP, that means kids will be taken out of child care programs that their families depend on. This would hurt our families and kids across the state, and we need to intervene and invest in this critical program."

“In the last few years, child care has been the crown jewel of the state budget. We’ve made childcare more accessible and affordable for middle income New Yorkers. But we are now at a crossroads where we must choose between buttressing our investment to protect the progress we’ve made or to allow these gains to erode. Allowing our progress to falter now would be to abandon New Yorkers families when they need us most. We owe it to our children and to the future of New York to continue to make investments into the childcare system so that our communities, economies, and New Yorkers can continue to thrive,” **said Assemblywoman Jen Lunsford**

“The child care crisis isn’t just coming—it’s already here, and families in Madison County are feeling the impact. The CCAP shortfall is forcing counties to close enrollment, leaving working parents without options and putting small child care providers at risk of shutting down. We’ve made meaningful progress on child care in recent years, but without urgent action, we risk losing everything we’ve gained. Investing at least $1 billion more into child care is not just necessary—it’s the right thing to do for working families across New York,” said **Assemblyman Brian Miller (122nd AD).**

“Affordable child care is a necessity for working families and is a critical component of a child's development. But, at a time of such great need, flat funding is effectively a budget cut," **said Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF - Manhattan), Chair of the Assembly Committee on Housing.** "As we work to finalize our state budget, we must support the thousands of families around the state that rely on Child Care Assistance Program vouchers to work and make ends meet for their families. A failure to increase funding to cover the growing cost of this program will leave countless families without any other options. Our final budget must invest in the child care work force, the Child Care Assistance Program and the families it serves.”

“Families should not have to choose between child care and work. The news that 4,000-7,000 families across our state will lose childcare access is a painful reminder as New York faces the rising cost of living. Families are still disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and continue to struggle with economic, healthcare and housing difficulties. I joined my colleagues in requesting $1 billion for child care over what was proposed in the Executive Budget. We need to be prepared to respond to this crisis,” **said Assemblyman Khaleel Anderson**

Assemblymember John T. McDonald III, RPh said, "The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is vital for many families who rely on being able to have affordable, quality child care so they can continue with their own employment. The needs are great and will only continue to

grow. To the extent possible, I hope we can continue to support the CCAP to ensure that families will not have to struggle with any lapse in their child care."

State Senator Julia Salazar said, "Just as nurturing childcare is necessary for parents to work and everyday business to function, childcare workers are essential to keeping childcare centers open. The Senate one-house included $500 million in workforce wage supplements so that our childcare workers receive what they need and deserve to keep New York running--and we must make sure those vital funds remain in the final budget. New York's childcare crisis is real, but lawmakers can help resolve it--and we must."

"New York's child care system is at a breaking point. Without immediate action, thousands of families will lose the assistance they rely on. Child care providers will be forced to turn families away or close their doors altogether, leaving parents with nowhere to turn. New York State was finally making headway on child care access, so we must prioritize child care funding in the budget to prevent devastating disruptions for families," **said Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon.**

"As Labor Chair, my focus is building an economy that works for everyone, and affordable child care is essential to parents and caregivers participating in our workforce," **said Assemblymember Harry B. Bronson (AD-138), Chair Assembly Labor Committee.** "Child care workers and providers are also critical drivers of New York's economy, and present a significant opportunity to grow our workforce. However, if we continue to shortchange this system we will find many families without the quality, dependable child care they need. It's time to do what's right by broadly investing in the child care workforce New York requires to drive our economy."

"Ensuring that New Yorkers have access to affordable childcare is imperative if we want to keep our economy vibrant. Working parents will otherwise be forced to make tough choices and childcare facilities will also be forced to close if the funding is not in place to help hard working New Yorkers have safe, reliable care for their kids. We must take action in our budget to protect working families," **said Assemblywoman Dana Levenberg.**

"No parent should have to make a choice between childcare and putting food on the table," **said Assemblymember Didi Barrett.** "The Child Care Assistance Program is a lifeline for working families and the counties and providers in my Assembly District rely on this critical funding. As the cost of childcare continues to rise, I stand with my colleagues in calling for additional investments in our caregiving infrastructure and CCAP in the final enacted budget."

"If affordability is the theme of this year's budget, we must get this child care funding right. Child care is a triple-workforce investment, granting providers to earn a decent wage, allowing parents to return to work, and providing children with the interventions they need during the most critical stages of their social, emotional, and cognitive development. We have been working so hard to move towards universal care, we cannot allow any budget shortfalls to set us back, " **said Senator Jessica Ramos.**

"The accessibility of child care is one of the few nonpartisan issues that I believe everyone should be able to support. I represent many small towns in the 107th district, where working-class families will feel the brunt of inadequate funding for child care. In my observation, what best serves the children and working parents of my district is proper funding for child care assistance in the state budget.," **said Assemblyman Scott Bendett**

"A funding shortfall for child care is already impacting the New Yorkers who need this essential service the most, and it is expected to impact thousands more working-class families each month. No parent should have to face the impossible choice between working to put food on the table or providing quality care for their children," **said Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn** "We have made great strides towards improving child care access and affordability, but our work can't stop: that's why I am strongly standing in solidarity to close this essential funding gap so we can ensure equitable care for all families."

"Childcare is essential for economic development and supporting working families. The Child Care Assistance Program helps families afford childcare and is a vital resource for many families across the state. Unfortunately, the funding is running out, leaving many families in the North Country without the means to afford childcare anymore. This will be devastating for the North Country- the state needs to make sure there is enough funding for this program to continue and avoid cutting off families from this important resource," **said Assemblyman Billy Jones**

State Senator Cordell Cleare stated, "My position has been the same all along--at least $2 Billion in FY 2025-26 to support the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) combined with a plan to move forward with a universal program as soon as possible. It is the right, rational and moral thing to do for our constituents and our communities."

"It would be incredibly disappointing to have secured funding in our state budget to address affordability issues for New Yorkers only to witness thousands of families lose their child care. This crisis requires leadership and decisiveness and we know where we can get the money. It is time that our leaders support revenue-raising pieces of legislation that would increase taxes on wealth to provide basic needs to low-income New Yorkers and families. I hope Governor Hochul will listen to the calls to action and respond as only a mother can," **said Assembly Member Jessica González-Rojas, Chair of the Task Force on Women's Issues.**

"Child care is essential for families, children's development, and our economy. Without action, thousands will lose access, forcing parents to make impossible choices and putting providers at risk of closing. Child care keeps New Yorkers working and children safe. New York must invest in the child care assistance program and workforce supports to prevent families from losing care and ensure programs can operate at full capacity to meet demand," **said Senator Rob Rolison**

NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. said, "New York families depend on access to affordable childcare, and without immediate investment in workforce wages and voucher funding, we risk destabilizing a system that working parents and providers rely on. A failure to act would mean thousands of families losing access to care, providers struggling to stay open, and a workforce

crisis due to insufficient staffing, caused by low wages. We must ensure the final State Budget includes the necessary and appropriate funding to keep childcare accessible, affordable, and sustainable for all."

"We have made great progress in New York State, expanding eligibility for childcare and providing parents with the ability to enter the workforce and provide for their families. But that progress is now in jeopardy. Now is the time for us to back up our commitment to childcare with the resources necessary to keep our promises to the families across New York who depend on quality, affordable childcare," **said Assemblymember Karen McMahon (D-146th District)**

"As someone who cares deeply about child care-- both in NYC and statewide-- I urge us to keep our commitment to child care. These programs keep parents employed. Yet I am hearing that programs may soon be forced to close their doors in the coming months. This is a crisis for families, **said Senator Zellnor Myrie.** "Without an additional investment, counties will be forced to close access and start waitlists. A young child on a waitlist is losing an opportunity, as are the adults in that child's life. I hope that NYS leaders can work to ensure that all currently eligible families continue to receive the child care they rely on… and that we make good on the promises we've made to expand affordability/accessibility to those who need it most."

"New York's childcare system is barely standing, worsening the already devastating affordability crisis for working parents, especially working women. This year's budget must include at least $1 billion for childcare over the Governor's proposal, and pave a pathway to Universal Childcare. Getting childcare should be as easy as sending your kid to school!" **said Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha**

"I understand that we are living in very uncertain times, however, as a State, we should make every effort to fully fund our childcare programs as a way to support our struggling families and providers. Access to affordable childcare has become a necessity for many New York families that would otherwise need to make the difficult decision of leaving the State due to the prohibitive costs of childcare. Many providers are at risk of closing their doors as they struggle to sustain operations. We have made significant strides and continuing to invest in high-quality child care is critical to our State's future," **said Senator Gustavo Rivera**

"I am deeply concerned about the shortfall in funding for the Childcare Assistance Program and the impact this will have on my constituents and working parents across the state. We need mothers and fathers to stay in the workforce with the confidence that their children are receiving quality care at an affordable cost. I join my colleagues in asking the governor to address this significant economic issue in the budget," **said Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner.**

"Childcare has become a critical component of the social fabric and economic foundation within our communities. As the demand for childcare has grown, so too has the struggle for access with barriers ranging from availability to affordability. If we are to solve the affordability challenges facing New York families statewide, access to childcare has to be part of that conversation and we must ensure the State budget reflects this priority," **said Assemblyman Matthew Simpson**

Senator Samra G. Brouk (SD-55) said, “We know childcare costs are astronomical for New York families, but there are also strains on the childcare workforce. I strongly support the Empire State Campaign for Childcare in their ask to include at least $1 billion for workforce compensation for the child care workforce in this year’s budget. Without investments in our workforce, childcare facilities will not be equipped to deliver the high quality care that New Yorkers deserve.”

"Thousands of New York families are at risk of losing the child care they depend on just to make ends meet. We cannot balance the budget on the backs of working parents and children. We must make a real investment in our budget to keep families secure, our workforce strong, and our kids safe,” **said Senator Robert Jackson**

"New York State has made significant strides in child care affordability and accessibility for New York families, this is not the time to backslide," **said Senator Roxanne J. Persaud, Chair of the Senate Social Service Committee.** "We face a significant shortfall in funding that would leave thousands of otherwise eligible families without childcare. We owe it to these hard-working families to ensure we are putting our money where our mouth is."

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher said, "Access to affordable childcare is one of the top issues that drives people out of our state and makes them believe that New York is an inaccessible place to build a life. Providing adequate funding isn't just a matter of ensuring parents have essential care; it also supports our state's child care workforce, ensuring these critical workers have decently paying jobs and can sustain themselves in NY. If we want to be a state where people can live and thrive, we must invest to support our families and child care workers."

“As a mom of young children, I know firsthand how essential child care is—not just for working parents, but for the well-being and development of our kids," **said Assemblymember Grace Lee.** “If we don’t include at least $1 billion more in the final budget, we will face a severe shortfall that will hurt working parents, providers, and, most of all, our children.”

"New York State must invest more in the Child Care Assistance Program because working families deserve access to quality, affordable child care,” **said State Senator Lea Webb.** “Programs like this are essential—they give parents the support they need to stay in the workforce while ensuring children have a safe, nurturing environment to learn and grow. When we invest in child care, we invest in our economy, our communities, and the future of our state.”

“The child care crisis isn’t just coming—it’s already here, and families in Madison County are feeling the impact. The CCAP shortfall is forcing counties to close enrollment, leaving working parents without options and putting small child care providers at risk of shutting down. We’ve made meaningful progress on child care in recent years, but without urgent action, we risk losing everything we’ve gained. Investing at least $1 billion more into child care is not just necessary—it’s the right thing to do for working families across New York,” **said Assemblyman Brian**

Miller (122nd AD).

“The threat of not including to sustain a fully funded Childcare Assistance Program in this years’ budget is alarming and unacceptable **says Assemblywoman Nikki Lucas**. The idea that an estimated 60,000 children will lose access to childcare is irresponsible and unsafe; not only will it show a lack of support for working families, it disrupts the flow of a stable economy.”

“We can’t pass this budget without funding childcare vouchers for all families who rely on them in New York City. By not funding this critical resource we will make New York City even less affordable for thousands of working families,” **said Assemblymember Robert Carroll**

“Closing down the door on budget negotiations right now when families and children are counting on us is irresponsible. Investing in child care and essential services isn’t just a line item, it’s a commitment to our future. It’s a way to help out families when they’re most in need. Childcare is essential to help keep our promise of having an affordable state,” **said Assemblyman Al Taylor**

“In the past few years New York State has made incredible progress towards addressing a critical need and recurring concern for working families: creating affordable options for child care. The idea of thousands of families losing access to the Child Care Assistance Program is not only unconscionable to our constituents but an unacceptable backwards step on the part of the New York State Legislature as well. I look forward to working closely with our dutiful leadership to ensure we correct this budget shortfall and continue our steadfast commitment to supporting families in New York,” **said Assemblyman Noah Burroughs**

“New York has made real progress in expanding access to child care, and now is the time to protect that progress. Without action, families could suddenly face increased child care costs that could force parents out of the workforce entirely. By filling this funding gap, we can preserve access to the Child Care Assistance Program and ensure families are not left behind,” **said Senator Nathalia Fernandez**

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