



NYS AAP
The NYS AAP is a Coalition of AAP NY Chapters 1, 2 & 3

Children's Champions Since 1914

The Education Trust–New York

United Way of Greater Rochester



July 7, 2021

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write to respectfully urge you to sign and enact the Child Poverty Reduction Act, S.2755C/A.1160C without delay. This legislation would have New York's leaders publicly declare their intent to cut child poverty in half in ten years, with attention to racial equity. The bill swept through the Legislature with near-unanimous upstate and downstate, rural, urban, and suburban support and bipartisan co-sponsorship. As New York mounts its recovery from the pandemic, this legislation will ensure that our children are centered in that recovery.

We appreciate your leadership on child poverty, identifying it as a critical issue during your COVID briefings in 2020, creating the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative, and spearheading a minimum wage increase. Yet for too long, New York has allowed hundreds of thousands of children endure the hardships of poverty – in times of recession, and in times of plenty. New York entered the pandemic with more than 700,000 children living in poverty, representing 18 percent of all New York children, with that percentage a full 10 points higher for Black children, and 7 for Latino children. Compared to the rest of the nation, New York children were more likely to live in poverty than children in 32 other states. And these data do not include the hundreds of thousands of children and families pushed into and near to poverty since the pandemic struck.

For the coming year, New York has real support from the federal government to turn the tide on child poverty, via the American Rescue Plan Act, arguably the most consequential investment in the nation's children in a generation. Yet the American Rescue Plan will not lift all New York children out of poverty. It leaves out tens of thousands of immigrant children, and it is temporary.

For our children experiencing poverty, every day that we fail to prioritize ending child poverty puts them more at risk for material hardship and negative long-term outcomes. The experience of poverty and trauma in childhood can have long-lasting impacts on development. The toxic

stress of poverty can alter the brain development of young children – causing permanent changes in the structure and functioning of the brain. As a result, many children who experience poverty face significant challenges – in the form of poor health, academic obstacles, and lower earnings – for the rest of their lives. With the stakes so high, there should be no delay in tackling child poverty in every inch of our great state.

S.2755C/A.1160C provides New York the tools needed to reduce child poverty. It makes a public commitment to cutting child poverty in half in ten years; requires an annual public report of the effects of budget proposals on child poverty and regular reporting on progress; and establishes the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council to develop a plan to achieve the goal.

We urge you to sign S.2755C/A.1160C to help create the conditions for New York to begin turning the tide on child poverty once and for all.

Sincerely,

Children's Defense Fund-NY
Citizens' Committee for Children of NY
New York Immigration Coalition
NYS American Academy of Pediatrics, Chapters 1, 2 & 3
Prevent Child Abuse NY
Robin Hood
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
The Children's Agenda
The Education Trust-New York
United Way of Greater Rochester
Westchester Children's Association

cc: Harry Bronson, NYS Assembly
Jillian Faison, Executive Chamber
Michael Hein, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Jessica Ramos, NYS Senate
Christopher Tavella, Executive Chamber