

State Senators pledge to propose nearly \$200 million in childcare subsidies ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

In a bid to alleviate the high cost of being a parent in New York, state senators met with childcare advocates, union officials and other interested parties to propose a combined total of \$182 million in restorations and expansions of childcare programs for the next state budget.

The new proposal put forward by State Sens. David Carlucci, Diane Savino and Jeff Klein, allocates \$100 million in funds for the restoration of the state's Facilitated Enrollment Program, which relaxes eligibility requirements and manages costs for parents. The proposal also allocates \$82 million to restore cuts to general child care subsidies in the NYS Child Care Block Grant, allowing for greater enrollment.

Facilitated enrollment was given particular attention due to its expansion of eligibility as well as financing. If included in the budget, the \$100 million would be accessible to families up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level of \$94,200 and cap family contributions at 10% of household income.

The Child Care Block Grant, which will be pushed when Governor Cuomo makes his recommendations for the next budget, has been the target of heavy cuts in recent years, dropping close to \$100 million since the 2010-2011 budget. The Block Grant currently receives \$917 million in funding, while Facilitated Enrollment receives \$7.3 million.

Making matters worse is the high cost of childcare in the state. New York has some of the highest childcare rates in the United States, with an average of 27 percent of monthly self-sufficiency wages required for child care in Westchester County.

"When we have some of the highest childcare costs in the nation, that's a recipe for disaster," Carlucci, who brought along his five and a half month old son Jack for the event, said.

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The Independent Democratic Caucus, which sponsored a report on the effects of funding childcare, argued the impact would be significant. The caucus anticipates about 13,000 more children can be served by the restoration of general subsidies and about 15,327 can be served by the expansion of facilitated enrollment.

Region: United States ^[2]

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