



**Statement from the Empire State Campaign for Child Care
On the New York State Assembly and New York State Senate Budget Resolutions**

Albany, N.Y. (March 12, 2024) – In response to the NYS Senate and Assembly Budget proposals, Shoshana Hershkowitz, Campaign Manager for the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, says, “We commend the Senate and the Assembly for including \$220 million in additional funds for child care workforce retention grants, bringing the total investment in the workforce to \$500 million. While this falls short of the \$1.2 billion that is needed, it is a critical investment in the ‘workforce behind the workforce.’ What is needed in the final budget, however, is a commitment to providing workforce supplements on a permanent basis - as was recommended in the Senate resolution - and for them to be paid out promptly and fully. This is the only sure way to stem the tide of educators leaving the field, which is in turn deepening the state’s child care capacity shortage just as the state’s child care assistance program is expanding in the wake of New York’s recent- and historic - investments in child care assistance.

Both houses propose to ensure that the many parents who work variable hours in retail, the trades, the gig economy and restaurants can access child care by ending the state’s practice of tying child care assistance to caretakers’ exact hours of work. We applaud both houses for including proposals to increase the rate paid to child care providers for serving families experiencing homelessness, and families that need care during non-traditional hours. Finally, we welcome the Senate’s proposal to expand the pilot projects commenced last year to provide scholarships to families needing child care who are ineligible for the statewide child care assistance program due to the child’s immigration status, or the episodic nature of the parents’ work schedule. These proposals take aim at barriers that have disproportionately kept low-income, immigrant, and Black and brown New York families from accessing child care assistance.

In the coming weeks as state leaders negotiate the final budget, the Empire State Campaign for Child Care will continue advocating for the establishment of a permanent workforce compensation fund of **\$1.2 billion in the FY 2025 budget** along with decoupling and other proposals to eliminate inequitable barriers to child care assistance. The time is now for permanent, sustained investment, rather than band aids.”

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 nearly 100 organizations, along with hundreds of parents and child care providers from every corner of New York State. Every day, our membership is growing; more than 400 New Yorkers participated in our February 6, 2024 Day of Action.