

NEW YORK STATE
A S S E M B L Y

SHELDON SILVER, SPEAKER



committee on
Social Services
Keith L.T. Wright, Chair



Annual Report 2010



KEITH L. T. WRIGHT
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December 15, 2010

The Honorable Sheldon Silver
Speaker of the Assembly
Room 932
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Speaker Silver:

On behalf of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, I respectfully submit to you the Committee's 2010 Annual Report. Again this year, the Committee was successful in securing passage of a number of measures that will assist low-income individuals and families achieve greater economic security, thereby providing enhanced opportunities for them to escape poverty.

Many of the legislative initiatives advanced by the Committee focused on the need to improve the current welfare system in order to provide recipients with the necessary support to transition from public assistance to economic independence. To demonstrate this commitment, the Committee worked diligently during the budget securing funding for Summer Youth Employment, Career Pathways, Wheels for Work, homeless prevention and intervention programs, Displaced Homemakers Program, Welfare to Careers, and for other important programs.

Furthermore, the Committee made permanent legislation that allows work study programs, internships, externships and other work placements to count toward meeting the student's work requirements while receiving public assistance (A.10961). If recipients are striving to balance the demands of their academic schedules with their required work activities, it is sound policy to require districts to make reasonable efforts to assign work activities that do not conflict with the student's academic schedule.

Lack of education is one of the leading causes of long term dependence on public assistance. Most of the public assistance recipients are without a high school diploma and/or basic literacy skills. The Assembly has continued to support bill A.1827-A, which would allow new educational opportunities for public assistance recipients. Additionally, there are undeniable long-term positive effects for children of parents who are able to become better educated.

To address the ongoing concern of New York City's pending policy to start charging rent to homeless families who live in publicly run homeless shelters; I was very pleased that an agreement was reached with the Governor and New York City to implement a demonstration project that authorizes New York City to create a Savings Planning Program for people residing in a New York City homeless shelter that also have an income. This bill will be reexamined in March 2016 to see if it is serving all parties in the most effective way. Without this legislation a family could be evicted from a shelter if they failed to pay the required "rent."

In an effort to assist public assistance recipients with staying focused on their work activities, A.11409 would streamline conciliation processes by focusing on re-engaging the client. Under the current process, even when the recipient misses just one appointment, the local social services district is required to expend time and resources focused on sanctioning the client rather than reengaging the client in work activities as soon as possible. Not only would this bill enable the local social services districts to focus time and resources on the key goal of engagement, but this bill also helps the recipients meet the necessary requirements to receive benefits.

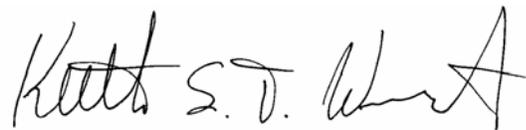
The Assembly was also successful in rejecting a series of proposed budget cuts and programmatic changes in the State's social services programs. We have remained adamant in our position that increasing the public assistance grant is the right thing to do for needy New Yorkers. I was pleased that the commitment was honored after this year's budget negotiations. I was very pleased that Career Pathways received some restoration in this year's budget. Career Pathways is a workforce development strategy that links basic education to occupational training.

I was disappointed the Governor vetoed A.1459, which would authorize the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance to develop a plan to help eligible low-income households with their cooling needs under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LI-HEAP). This bill would add this service to current statute to insure those eligible households continue to receive cooling assistance in future administrations.

I would like to applaud Assemblywoman Deborah Glick on her hard work and dedication on the passage of the 30% rent cap for people living with HIV/AIDS (A.2565). The Governor's veto was disappointing to many in community and the Legislature.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee members for all their hard work and dedication. I would also like to thank you for your support and leadership throughout the past session. We look forward to working with you in the 2011 legislative session in order to protect and improve vital services for the indigent of our State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith L.T. Wright". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Keith L.T. Wright
Chair
Committee on Social Services

**2010 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Keith L.T. Wright
Chair**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Standing Committee on Social Services has jurisdiction over legislation affecting programs providing financial, medical and support services to indigent households in New York State. The work of the Committee also affects the aged, blind and disabled residing in the community and in residential care facilities. The statutory basis for these programs is contained in the State Social Services Law.

During the 2010 Session, the Committee reviewed 185 bills and investigated numerous issues affecting the lives of those at or near poverty throughout the State. The Committee reported several pieces of legislation aimed at improving the lives of senior citizens, children, the disabled, the working poor and those in receipt of public assistance (PA) or other forms of government funded assistance.

The Committee works closely with the Committees on Health, Children and Families, Aging, Labor and Housing and with the Task Forces on the Homeless and Food, Farm and Nutrition Policy. The Committee has legislative oversight responsibilities for programs administered by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

OTDA is the state agency that is responsible for supervising programs that provide assistance and support to eligible families and individuals in the state. Some of OTDA's functions include: providing temporary cash assistance; providing assistance in paying for food; providing heating assistance; overseeing New York State's child support enforcement program; determining certain aspects of eligibility for Social Security Disability benefits; supervising homeless housing and services programs; and providing assistance to certain immigrant populations.

In 1996, the nation's welfare system was dramatically reformed with the enactment of the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). The federal law adopted a work first approach, eliminated the entitlement to cash assistance, and imposed time limits, work requirements and sanctions. The cornerstone of the law was the creation of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, which provides states with the money to fund their cash assistance and welfare to work programs. There are 58 social service districts in New York State providing services to its residents.

The local Department of Social Services (DSS) or Human Resource Administration (HRA) in New York City provides temporary help to individuals and families with their economic and social services needs to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. The Legislature has enacted the Social Services Law to allow the administration of the basic temporary assistance and emergency support programs for the State. These programs are Family Assistance, Safety Net Assistance, Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children, Emergency Assistance for Adults, and certain parts of the Supplemental Security Income Program.

- Family Assistance (FA)/Safety Net Assistance (SNA) - FA is one of the federally funded temporary assistance (TA) programs for families. FA can only be provided to a family that includes a minor child living with a parent or caretaker relative, or to a pregnant woman. As a TANF-funded program, FA is subject to the State 60-month lifetime limit on assistance. The SNA program to provide assistance to individuals and families who are ineligible for FA or other federal temporary assistance programs, including Refugee Cash Assistance. The SNA program is comprised of cash and a non-cash component.

- Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF) - is a federally funded program which provides assistance to deal with crisis situations threatening a family with a child(ren) under the age of 18, or under 19 and attending full time secondary school or the equivalent level of vocational or technical training. EAF is to meet needs resulting from a sudden occurrence or a set of circumstances that was unforeseen and beyond the applicant's control that demand immediate attention.
- Emergency Assistance for Adults- means grants of assistance to aged, blind or disabled individuals and couples who have been determined eligible for or are receiving Federal supplemental security income benefits or additional State payments and applied for such assistance to meet emergency needs that cannot be met by the regular monthly benefits of SSI and additional State payments.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program- was established by Congress in 1974 under Title XVI of the Social Security Act. The Social Security Administration (SSA) administers the program which provides a Federal flat grant to individuals and couples who are aged, blind and disabled. The flat grant is different for individuals and for couples and also varies according to living arrangement. New York State provides a supplement to this federal grant.

Local districts have a responsibility to provide services and assistance in an effort to prevent homelessness, to meet the temporary housing and other immediate needs for eligible homeless persons and to assist homeless persons to secure permanent housing. Eligible homeless persons are those persons who are both homeless and eligible for TA.

Local districts must also screen all adult and head of household applicants and recipients of TA for alcoholism or substance abuse and domestic violence. The Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) credentialed drug and/or alcohol counselors must assess individuals identified through the screening process to determine whether the person needs to seek alcohol and/or substance abuse treatment. The Family Violence Option allows the state to address the safety needs of domestic violence victims and their children including procedures for screenings, assessments, and service referrals.

The New York State Food Stamp Program, known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), can help put healthy food on the table. The Food Stamp Program issues monthly benefits that can be used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. Food stamp benefits help low-income working people, seniors, the disabled and others feed their families. Benefits are provided through an electronic benefit card, similar to a debit or credit card. Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income, expenses and other factors. Recent changes to the Food Stamp Program have made it easier for many working households to apply and gain access to these critical nutrition supports.

II. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION – 2010

A. INCOME MAINTENANCE

1. **Automobile Resource Exemptions** **A.1516 (Wright/S.6680 Krueger)**

When an individual or household applies for public assistance, all property and resources must be accounted for in order to determine eligibility. Examples include savings accounts, investment property, housing, land, and vehicles. Current law provides a two-tier system for determining the acceptability of retaining an individual's vehicle. An individual may retain his or her vehicle if the vehicle is accessed at \$4,650. If the individual is using the vehicle to seek or maintain employment the vehicle may be valued up to \$9,300. This bill would remove the reference to the lower value, allowing all Public Assistance applicants to retain a vehicle worth \$9,300. This allows for individuals to have a more dependable form of transportation to travel to work and child care centers, which in turn allows individuals on public assistance to become more self-sufficient.

This bill passed the Assembly and the Senate but was vetoed by the Governor.

Veto Message 6793 states the enactment of this bill would increase the number of people who would become eligible to receive public assistance. Due to the fiscal climate and the potential to increase the public assistance case load, the Governor stated this legislation should be taken up as part of the budget.

B. MEDICAID

1. **Termination of Eligibility and Consideration of Re-Application** **A.5948-A (Espaillat/S.1103-A Dilan)**

Currently, the Office of Administrative Hearings and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance require Medicaid recipients, disabled or non-disabled, to attend a scheduled hearing about potential termination of their Medicaid coverage. Missing a hearing could result in the termination of an individual's Medicaid coverage without notice, even if he or she is disabled.

The individual must then undergo a re-application process, which can take anywhere from 30 to 60 days. This legislation is intended to provide disabled and other incapacitated individuals whose Medicaid is terminated because they have missed a scheduled hearing with 10-day written notification of the termination date. Furthermore, it would expedite the re-application process for an individual who must re-apply for Medicaid.

This bill passed the Assembly and the Senate but was vetoed by the Governor.

Veto Message 6820 states that the Governor deems current law and regulations in regards to the fair hearing process are acceptable and that the current language of the bill could be misconstrued to allow continued medical coverage to those who continually miss fair hearings and are rescheduled to appear. Furthermore the Governor states that the enactment of this legislation

would create a significant burden on state and local budgets, due to costs associated with expanding the continuation of medical coverage and administration that is related to the new procedures this bill would require.

C. HOUSING

1. Shelter Cost Limit for Persons living with HIV/AIDS A.2565 (Glick/S.2664 Duane)

This bill would provide that certain persons living with HIV or AIDS contribute no more than 30% of their income toward shelter costs. The enactment of this bill would help those suffering from this debilitating and terminal illness to contribute more of their income towards necessary and critical medical expenditures. This legislation would ensure that these extremely vulnerable citizens would be able to afford their housing costs so that they may be able to obtain necessary medical treatment and live a healthier lifestyle.

This bill passed the Assembly and the Senate, but was vetoed by the Governor.

Veto Message 6818 states the Governor was unwilling to create a new burden due to the potential fiscal implications of this bill on the State and Local districts.

D. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Notification of Emergency Needs Assistance A.377-A (Jacobs/S.1083-A Dilan)

Public Assistance applicants are entitled to emergency needs assistance or care when a local social services official determines that an emergency situation exists. Pre-investigation grants are issued to meet an immediate need for a specific essential item when financial eligibility for Public Assistance has not been fully established. This may be applicable when an applicant is facing immediate eviction or does not have adequate food or fuel for heating. This law amends Section 133 of Social Services law to require a local social services official to inform Public Assistance applicants both verbally and in writing of the availability of grants for emergency needs assistance or care, including pre-investigation grants, and to make a determination at the same time as to whether the applicant has an immediate need. Applicants would also be notified of their right to an expedited hearing when emergency needs assistance is denied, and would be informed in writing of the reason(s) for denial.

This bill was signed into law, Chapter 455.

2. Awareness of Public Assistance Reimbursement A. 8873-A (Gibson)

This legislation would require the local social services district to provide applicants for public assistance orally and in writing that the individual may be liable to reimburse the state for public assistance received. This would require an acknowledgement by signature from the applicant on a

form separate from all other public assistance related paperwork, and placed in the applicants file. This legislation allows individuals to be fully aware of their commitment in any repayment process that might occur due to time spent on public assistance.

This bill passed the Assembly.

**3. Expansion of the Definition of Domestic Violence
A.10440-B (Weinstein/S.7496 Hassell-Thompson)**

In Chapter 326 of 2008 the definition of family or household, found in Article 8 of the Family Court Act was expanded to include “intimate relationships”, and ensured that the definition of a victim of domestic violence was not limited by age. When this was modified, there were not conforming changes made to Section 459-a of the Social Services Law, which provides definitions that control the qualifications for services for domestic violence victims. This change is crucial to ensure that victims of domestic violence are not arbitrarily precluded from services based on incomplete definitions of family or household member and victim of domestic violence.

This bill passed the Assembly.

**4. Public Assistance Work Activity Requirement
A.10961 (Wright/S.7336 Squadron)**

Work study programs, internships, externships and other work placements provide the opportunity to help PA recipients move toward economic independence through a combination of work and education. Participation in such activities should count toward meeting the student's work requirements. Further, if recipients are striving to balance the demands of their academic schedules with their required work activities, it is sound policy to require districts to make reasonable efforts to assign work activities that do not conflict with the student's academic schedule. This bill would allow participation in work study programs, internships and externships to count towards a recipient's work participation rate and would require districts to make reasonable efforts to assign such recipients in activities that do not conflict with academic schedules.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 145.

**5. Assisted Living Program
A.11343 (Parment/S.7826 Duane)**

This bill continues the demonstration program to allow certain assisted living facilities to increase their number of assisted living beds by up to thirty percent of its approved bed level to accommodate individuals awaiting placement into assisted living program.

This bill was signed into law, Chapter 374.

III. SFY 2010-11 STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

A. Income Savings Plan Demonstration Project

Mid year 2009, New York City started charging rent to the homeless families and individuals who live in shelters operated by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) who also earn income from employment. After much collaboration with a number of stakeholders, an agreement was reached that satisfied all parties. Beginning February 2011, any person residing in a DHS shelter with an income from employment will be required to put a portion of their income into a savings account. The money, plus any interest earned will be returned to the individual upon their discharge from the shelter.

B. Overview of the TANF Block Grant

The nation's welfare system was dramatically reformed with the enactment of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). The federal law adopted a "work first" approach, eliminated the entitlement to cash assistance, and imposed time limits, work requirements and sanctions. The cornerstone of the law was the creation of the TANF block grant, which provides \$16.5 billion to states to fund their cash assistance and welfare-to-work programs.

New York received \$2.443 billion for the Family Assistance program through the federal TANF block grant. SFY 2009-10 marked the thirteenth year of the TANF block grant. New York State received an additional \$1.2 billion in TANF Contingency Funds and Emergency Contingency Funds. The amount of New York's allocation is based on the State's public assistance caseload and expenditures in the federal fiscal year (FFY) 1995. The 2010-11 State budget included approximately \$680 million to support benefit payments to low-income New Yorkers.

C. TANF Programs

New York's TANF program has developed into the State's most critical system of support and assistance for children and families who struggle to make ends meet. In New York, programs including wage supplements, tax credits, job training and skill development, case management and counseling, child care and transportation were developed to assist families in need during the transition to self-sufficiency through work. For several years, New York has been authorized to utilize TANF funds not only for families eligible for federal assistance through the FA program, but also for families whose income does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The SFY 2010-11 budget included a Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) to provide local districts with a block grant. In order for a program to receive funding out of the TANF surplus, it must meet one of the four TANF purposes:

1. Provide assistance to needy families;
2. End the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
3. Prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Below is a breakdown of State spending of the TANF dollars for the 2010-11 fiscal year:

CHILD CARE INVESTMENTS

The child care subsidy program provided by social service districts enables a parent or caretaker to work or engage in other approved activities. Child care subsidies help parent(s)/caretaker(s) to pay some or all of the cost of child care services. Over \$392 million was included in the budget to provide subsidies to parents.

EMPLOYMENT/TRANSITIONAL INITIATIVES

Wheels for Work: Wheels for Work received \$409,000 in the budget. These programs are designed to assist TANF eligible individuals with obtaining personal vehicles that are necessary for transportation to and from employment or other allowable work activities.

Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA): This program provides a monthly bus pass to allow eligible individuals, from seven member counties to travel to and from work, or to participate in work related activities. In Wayne County, funds are used to support the transportation costs of individuals who use the WATS Demand Response Bus Services for work and TANF work participation activities. Funds are also used to extend the LATS service hours to accommodate employees at Kraft. RGRTA was awarded \$403,000 in the budget.

Domestic Violence Screening: Involves identifying persons who are currently victims of domestic violence and offering temporary waivers of public assistance (PA) program requirements where compliance with such requirements would place the victim and/or victim's children at greater risk of harm or make it more difficult for them to escape from abuse. \$1.4 million was budgeted to provide these services.

Summer Youth Employment (SYEP): The purpose of the TANF SYEP is to provide eligible youth with a quality employment and educational experience during the summer months. For many youth, this is their first introduction to the world of work. Valuable lessons which center around employment, including work ethic, appropriate workplace behavior, interaction with co-workers and supervisors, receiving a paycheck and money management are learned. \$15.5 million is used to fund the employment program.

Transitional Jobs Program: This program received \$5 million to provide a combination of employment and education and/or training, so individuals can gain direct work experience plus build their skills to increase their future employment options. Participants will be able to earn a paycheck and help provide for their families, while also receiving targeted education and training services to support job retention and career advancement.

Green Pathways Out of Poverty: The Green Jobs program received \$2 million to allow Social Services Districts to provide job skills training and subsidized employment opportunities in “green industries” for public assistance recipients and low-income individuals. Participants in the Green Jobs Corps program will develop occupational skills that will enable them to get jobs in addition to supporting their ability to remain employed and advance their careers.

Healthcare Outreach Job Subsidies: This program received \$2 millions to establish subsidized employment opportunities for up to one year in the health care sector, including community outreach positions.

Nurse Family Partnership: This is a home visiting program in which a registered nurse provides case management and nursing services to at-risk pregnant women in order to prevent child abuse and promote healthy child development. This program received \$2 million and currently exists in all five boroughs of New York City, as well as Monroe and Onondaga counties.

SERVICES AND HEALTH INITIATIVES

Refugee Program: This New York State funded program received \$500,000 to supplement mainstream refugee services during the first 60 months of eligibility to fill in the gaps not covered by other programs, and to extend services beyond the time limits imposed by other programs.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Bridge Program: The Bridge Program, which operates in conjunction with the State University of New York's University Center for Academic and Workforce Development, provides local social services districts with employment preparation services specifically designed to provide Family Assistance (FA) and other TANF eligible families with the skills and supports necessary to obtain employment. The Bridge Program was allocated \$1 million.

Displaced Homemakers: The Displaced Homemaker Program has operated throughout New York State since the 1970s. It provides a continuum of support services for individuals who are primary caretakers in the home and who have experienced a loss of income due to separation, divorce, disability or death of an income-providing family member, or the individual has received federal or State assistance and is no longer eligible for this assistance. This program received \$1.605 million.

Supplemental Homeless Intervention Program (SHIP): The SHIP Program was allocated \$1.006 million to assist individuals and families that are homeless or at-risk of being homeless with housing location, eviction prevention and aftercare services.

ACCESS – Welfare to Careers: Metropolitan College's Welfare-to-Careers Consortium Program represents a unique collaboration among three major higher educational institutions in New York City (Metropolitan College, Medgar Evers College and Pace University). The Consortium affords participants the opportunity to earn their two-year degree or a baccalaureate degree, thereby greatly increasing their chances of gaining permanent, full-time employment at a sustainable salary level. \$250,000 was allocated to the ACCESS program.

Emergency Homeless Program: Provides assistance to organizations in local social services districts with a population in excess of two million. This program received \$125,000 to help to meet the emergency needs of homeless individuals and families and those at risk of becoming homeless who are eligible for TANF benefits and whose incomes do not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Disability Advocacy Program: Disability Advocacy Program provides for the legal representation of individuals whose federal disability benefits have been denied or may be discontinued, and received \$483,000 in this year's budget.

Supportive Housing for Families and Young Adults (SHFYA): The SHFYA Program provides comprehensive support services designed to stabilize, enhance employability, and/or enhance self-sufficiency for those residents (eligible families and young adults between the ages of 18 and 25) of supported housing who are formerly homeless, at risk of homelessness, and/or have exceeded or risk exceeding the TANF time limits. SHFYA received \$2.5 million in the budget.

Career Pathways: Career Pathways is a workforce development strategy that links basic education to occupational training, and when combined with integrated support services, enables participants to advance over time to higher level training and education and to living wage jobs in specific industry sectors. Individuals targeted for this initiative include public assistance recipients, young adults between the ages of 18-24, low-wage workers and households with incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Participants are provided with a clear and reliable course of action for building skills to progress in their careers. Programs are organized as a series of steps that lead participants toward employment with industry recognized credentials, certificates and/or licenses. The Career Pathways program received \$5 million in the budget.

Public Assistance Grant Increase: The non-shelter portion of the grant will increase ten percent for the next two years.

The 2010-2011 Executive Budget proposed to reduce the statutory public assistance grant increase from ten percent to five percent. The five percent increase would be for the next three consecutive years making the full implementation July 2013 rather than July 2011.

FLEXIBLE FUND FOR FAMILY SERVICES (FFFS)

The FFFS encompasses a number of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs administered by local departments of social services (districts) which are funded with the Federal TANF Services Block Grant. Total allocation for FFFS is \$960 million.

TANF Allocations (in Thousands)

<i>CATEGORY/ITEM</i>	<i>SFY 2010-2011 Executive</i>	<i>SFY 2010-2011 Enacted</i>
CHILD CARE		
-CARETAKER RELATIVE/KINSHIP	\$0	\$250
-CHILD CARE (Includes CAP)	\$392,967	\$392,967
-CHILD CARE DEMOS	\$0	\$5,265
- CHILD CARE SUNY/CUNY	\$0	\$1,643
EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITIONAL INITIATIVES		
-ACCESS - WELFARE TO CAREERS	\$0	\$250
-BRIDGE	\$0	\$1,000
-CAREER PATHWAYS	\$0	\$5,000
-GREEN JOB CORPS	\$3,000	\$2,000
-HEALTHCARE JOBS PROGRAM	\$5,000	\$2,000
-NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP	\$0	\$2,000
-RGRTA	\$0	\$403
-SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT	\$0	\$15,500
-TRANSITIONAL JOBS PROGRAM	\$10,000	\$5,000
-WHEELS FOR WORK	\$0	\$409
SERVICES AND HEALTH INITIATIVES		
-ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS	\$0	\$11,213
-DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS	\$0	\$1,605
-EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	\$0	\$125
-EMERGENCY HOMELESS	\$0	\$125
-HOMELESS ASSISTANCE (SHIP)	\$0	\$1,006
-PREVENTIVE SERVICES INITIATIVE	\$0	\$6,000
-REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT	\$0	\$500
-SETTLEMENT HOUSES	\$0	\$1,000
-SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	\$0	\$2,500
ADDITIONAL SERVICES		
-ATD/ALT TO RES PLACEMENT	\$0	\$6,000
-DAP	\$2,500	\$483
- DV SCREENING	\$0	\$1,449

IV. LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

A. Community Services Block Grant Hearing

Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at 10:30am

Roosevelt Hearing Room C, Legislative Office Building, Albany

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federal program created by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act to ameliorate the causes of poverty in communities. CSBG provides federal anti-poverty funding to a statewide network consisting of Community Action Agencies (CAAs), Community Action Programs (CAPs), and migrant and seasonal farm worker organizations, as designated by federal laws.

The New York State network is comprised of 52 CSBG grantees serving all 62 counties, which provide a range of services to meet the needs of low-income New Yorkers. Funding is also provided to four Indian Tribes/Tribal organizations, for a total of 56 entities.

The CSBG program purposes are to provide assistance to states and local communities working through a network of CAAs and other neighborhood organizations for reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient.

Local services are directed toward goals of achieving self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization, based on local assessments to determine need and resources available.

Witnesses at the hearing talked about the hopelessness, disparity, and violence that stem from poverty, and stressed the importance of federal, state, and local governments working collaboratively to address the root causes of poverty. Witnesses also talked about the link between poverty and child welfare, citing poverty as the most common factor in child protective cases. Many low-income families and PA recipients testified to the challenges they have in overcoming poverty, particularly in New York, where the cost of living is much higher than their wages can afford. Most of the families that testified work either full or part time, and nearly all of them talked about the frustration of not being able to make ends meet no matter how much or how hard they work.

B. New York State's Subsidized Employment and Work Force Development Programs

Monday, December 6, 2010 at 10:30am

Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany

Subsidized employment and training programs are among the most important factors in the ability of PA recipients to find and retain employment that pays a living wage. Subsidized employment and training provide opportunities for career advancement, skill development and higher wages. This hearing provided the Assembly with an opportunity to examine the impact of the enacted 2010 New York State budget on TANF-funded employment and training programs. Most of the witnesses spoke of the need to fund the Summer Youth Employment Program at the pass budget amount of \$35 million, to ensure the maximum number of teens are served.

APPENDIX A

**2010 SUMMARY OF ACTION ON BILLS REFERRED TO
THE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

<u>Final Action</u>	<u>Assembly Bills</u>	<u>Senate Bills</u>	<u>Total Bills</u>
Bills Reported With or Without Amendment			
To Floor; Not Returning to Committee	2	0	2
To Ways and Means	12	0	12
To Codes	2	0	2
To Rules	1	2	1
TOTAL	17	0	12
Bills Having Committee Reference Changed			
To Children and Families Committee	0	0	0
To Health Committee	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0
Senate Bills Substituted or Recalled			
Substituted	-	1	1
Recalled	-	0	0
TOTAL	-	1	1
Bills Never Reported, Held in Committee	18	0	18
Bills Never Reported, Died in Committee	102	0	102
Bills Having Enacting Clauses Stricken	3	0	3
TOTAL BILLS IN COMMITTEE	140	8	148
Total Number of Committee Meetings Held	7		

APPENDIX B

**FINAL ACTION ON BILLS REPORTED BY THE
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.377A Jacobs	S.1083-A Dilan	Chapter 455	This bill would require that local districts notify clients about the availability of immediate need grants and makes determinations as to their eligibility for them.
A.1288 Wright		Referred to Ways and Means	Requires a local social services district to accept or deny an application for public assistance no later than 30 days after the date of the application.
A.1406 Wright	S.4140 Krueger	Held for Consideration in Ways and Means	Would eliminate the statutory authority that permits local social services districts to require PA recipients to execute a mortgage in favor of the county in the amount of assistance received as a condition of eligibility.
A.1516 Wright		Referred to Ways and Means	This bill looks to remove the current two-tier automobile resource limit meaning, the social service district will only have the higher of the existing car value disregarded when determining a person's PA eligibility without any conditions on the use of the car.
A.1545 Wright		Referred to Ways and Means	Would repeal the section of law that requires a person to live in NYS for 12 months (to establish residence) before being eligible for full public assistance benefits.
A.1546 Wright		Referred to Ways and Means	Would provide that a social services official may not recover assistance properly paid as permitted where a recipient or former recipient of such assistance was required to participate in a work experience program without first crediting against such recovery the number of hours that the recipient actually participated in such program multiplied by the higher of the applicable state or federal minimum wage.
A.1681A Wright		Third Calendar Reading	Would eliminate the finger imaging requirement for applicants or recipients of food stamps who are not also applicants for or recipients of Family Assistance or Safety Net Assistance.
A. 2565 Glick	S. 2664 Duane	Referred to Ways & Means	Would ensure that persons living with HIV or AIDS, and who are receiving shelter assistance or an emergency shelter allowance, would not be required to pay more than 30 percent of the household's monthly unearned and/or earned income towards shelter costs, including rent and utilities.

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.4096-A Millman	S.2098-S Montgomery	Referred to Ways & Means	Would require local social service districts to give strong consideration to educational and training opportunities for sustainable wage jobs and nontraditional employment in their public assistance employment programs, for a person that has already obtained their high school diploma or GED.
A. 5948A Espaillat	S.1103A Dilan	Passed Assembly	Would provide for persons whose eligibility for medical assistance is terminated to receive 10 day written notice in advance of termination and speedy consideration of re-application.
A. 8873A Gibson		Passed Assembly	This bill would require the local districts to provide written information to the client regarding their responsibility to reimburse PA.
A.10440B Weinstein		Passed Assembly	This bill would add new definitions to "Victim of Domestic Violence" and "Family or household member." These are corresponding changes that have been made to the Family Court Law section 812.
A.10678 Sayward	S.7431 Little	Referred to Ways & Means	This bill would look to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rates for residential health care facilities in Essex County.
A.10961 Wright	S.7336 Squadron	Chapter 145	This bill would allow certain non-graduate approved work-study, internships, externships or work placements to count towards satisfying certain recipients work activity requirements would further an individual's educational progress.
A.11343 Parment	S.7826 Duane	Chapter 374	This bill continues the demonstration program to allow certain assisted living facilities to increase their number of assisted living beds by up to thirty percent of its approved bed level to accommodate individuals awaiting placement into assisted living program.
A.11388 Wright		Referred to Ways & Means	This bill would require that local districts notify clients about the availability of immediate need grants and makes determinations as to their eligibility for them.
A.11409 Wright		Referred to Codes	This bill would remove the durational sanctions established in Section 342 for the Social Services Law in relation to an individual's failure/refusal to comply with mandatory work requirements while receiving public assistance.

APPENDIX C

LAWS ENACTED DURING THE 2010 SESSION

CHAPTER	ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	DESCRIPTION
Chapter 455	A.377A Jacobs	S.1083-A Dilan	This bill would require that local districts notify clients about the availability of immediate need grants and makes determinations as to their eligibility for them.
Chapter 374	A.11343 Parment	S.7826 Duane	This bill continues the demonstration program to allow certain assisted living facilities to increase their number of assisted living beds by up to thirty percent of its approved bed level to accommodate individuals awaiting placement into assisted living program.
Chapter 145	A.10961 Wright	S.7336 Squadron	This bill would allow certain non-graduate approved work-study, internships, externships or work placements to count towards satisfying certain recipients work activity requirements would further an individual's educational progress.

APPENDIX D

2011 COMMITTEE GOALS

It remains the Committee's goal to advance legislation that will improve the current welfare system in turn bettering the lives of New York State residents.

The Committee continues to advance legislation that will allow education at a four year college to count towards a Public Assistance recipient's work participation hours. In accordance with federal law, New York should include programs that lead to a baccalaureate degree in the definition of vocational education that can be a countable work activity.

Each year it becomes more and more difficult for New Yorkers of all income levels to access adequate, safe and affordable housing. Homelessness has reached an all time high in New York State. More than 37,000 people are residing in the New York City's shelter system; 15,000 are children. The Committee will continue to work to review and expand access to housing resources for low-income individuals and those in need of supportive housing. The Committee stands committed to ensuring that homeless people, especially families, find adequate and affordable housing.

Increasing employment opportunities for low-income families and individuals remains a top priority for the Committee. The Committee will be looking at ways to increase employment opportunities through examination of existing jobs programs and development of new and innovative initiatives. One way will be to strengthen the partnership with the Public Housing Authorities to better utilize job opportunities that are offered. In collaboration with other committees, the lack of job opportunities for minority groups, particularly males, will be explored in hopes of addressing this problem. The ultimate goal is to provide employment opportunities so a person can be self-sufficient and self reliant.

Finally, the Committee is committed to aiding persons returning from incarceration whose transition back into society is stifled by many obstacles, including insufficient work opportunities, employment discrimination, and the inability to find suitable housing. Unfortunately, many inmates do not receive adequate programming while incarcerated to properly prepare for a return to the community. Additionally, there is a lack of continuity between prison and community programs that causes a gap in services for many people returning to the community from incarceration. The Committee will continue to work on facilitating and increasing access to social service programs for individuals who have completed periods of incarceration.

