



COMMITTEE ON
Social Services

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY



CARL E. HEASTIE, *Speaker*

ANDREW D. HEVESI, *Chair*



ANDREW HEVESI
Assemblyman 28th District
Queens County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Social Services Committee

COMMITTEES
Energy
Health
Labor
Insurance

December 15, 2019

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

Dear Speaker Heastie:

On behalf of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, I respectfully submit to you the Committee's 2019 Annual Report. The Committee secured enactment of policies and continued investments in programs that will help low-income individuals and families achieve greater economic security, thereby providing enhanced opportunities for them to escape poverty.

The New York State Assembly Social Services Committee's agenda for the 2020 legislative session will comprise of legislation and budget actions focused on reducing poverty and homelessness in New York State, as well as cementing opportunities for the disabled, survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking, and those effected by childhood trauma.

In 2016, our committee spearheaded the fight to ensure that the 35,000 supportive housing units for vulnerable New Yorkers will be built. These units, in addition to housing the recipients, will also provide mental health and substance use disorder, counseling, and other comprehensive services to assist those who are homeless, or who are on the verge of homelessness, spanning populations from children, to veterans, to domestic violence victims, and the elderly. This effort received bipartisan support from 133 members of the Assembly, as well as bipartisan support in the New York State Senate. The Mayor of the City of New York also publicly committed, and is currently in the process of building 15,000 units of supportive housing in New York City. Subsequently, the Governor announced in his 2016 State of the State Address that New York State would fund 20,000 of these units, and in the 2016-2017 enacted budget, \$1 billion was allocated to build the first 6,000 units.

Moreover, along with my colleagues in government, as well as the Coalition for the Homeless, Empire

Justice Center, VOCAL, the Legal Aid Society, and other advocacy organizations, the Social Services Committee will again focus on implementing A.1620-A (2019), which will enact the Home Stability Support (HSS) rent supplement program. There are now over 250,000 homeless people in New York State each year, and 3 out of 5 homeless New Yorkers are school-aged children. Last year in New York, 23,000 more people became homeless than escaped homelessness. To combat this epidemic, the committee will reaffirm the need for HSS, a statewide rental supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and are facing eviction and homelessness. This program would be 100% state funded and will provide mandate relief to financially strained counties.

Supportive housing and HSS will also reduce the use of ancillary services such as visits to detoxification centers, hospitalizations, and emergency room use. This in turn will also save taxpayers money. These programs are innovative and effective ways to combat the worst homeless crisis our state has encountered since the Great Depression.

Along with our continued efforts for HSS and supportive housing, I partnered with organizations such as the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Mayor's Taskforce Against Domestic Violence, the Lawyers Committee Against Domestic Violence, and Her Justice to craft legislation to assist survivors of domestic violence.

Further, the committee will continue to introduce legislation focused on helping survivors of human trafficking. At the end of the 2018 session, bill A.9566 (2018) was signed into law by Governor Cuomo, establishing culturally competent short-term and long-term safe house residential facilities and services operated by not-for-profit agencies for survivors of human trafficking. The placement in these facilities shall be available for survivors of human trafficking at the initial point of contact with law enforcement, a local social services district, or social or legal service providers. These services shall be culturally competent to the extent practicable to include helping these survivors with services such as case management, emergency temporary housing, health care, mental health counseling, drug addiction screening and treatment, language interpretation and translation services, English language instruction, job training and placement assistance, and post-employment services for job retention.

As we move into the 2020 session, we will be monitoring the administration and creation of these facilities to ensure compliance with the new law. We will also look to pass legislation providing temporary housing assistance to a single trafficking survivor, while allowing the program provider to be reimbursed by New York State for any payment differential for housing a single individual in a room intended for double occupancy, in order to address the system-wide lack of shelter for single adults.

Lastly, the Social Services Committee will continue to support legislation to combat the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs is the term given to describe traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; parental mental illness, substance abuse, or incarceration; parental separation or divorce; and domestic violence. ACEs harm children's developing brains so profoundly that the effects show up decades later if left unaddressed. The long term effects of ACEs may include chronic disease, mental illness, and the adoption of risk behaviors as coping mechanisms.

The single most effective tool in combating ACEs is the presence of a supportive adult relationship. We as a committee will continue to consider how to provide every adult who comes into contact with a child

in a professional setting training to recognize ACEs, which will allow them to in turn provide children and their families the tools they need to succeed despite these experiences. Children’s brains are resilient and with the proper tools and support, exposure to traumatic, adverse childhood experiences does not have to yield lifelong negative impacts.

As a first step in this direction, in 2019 Governor Cuomo signed A.4268/S.2659 (2019) into law. This legislation mandates that direct care workers in domestic violence shelters are trained to recognize, understand, and mitigate ACEs. In these shelters, directors and staff see the day-to-day impacts of ACEs on a two-generation level-both the mothers and children, yet staff may not know exactly what they are witnessing or how to appropriately address the concerns.

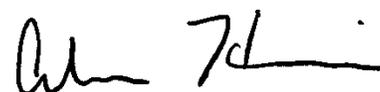
Similarly, A.2766-A/S.4990-A (2019) would provide training for day care providers to recognize the signs of and how to address ACEs. This bill passed both the Senate and Assembly in 2019 and we await the Governor Cuomo’s signature. Physicians, particularly pediatricians, are also uniquely suited to recognize ACEs in their patients, and A.2754 (2019) would ensure that physicians would take continuing medical education training to be better prepared to screen their patients for ACES.

Consistent training would lay the foundation for staff in these various environments to understand the prevalence of ACEs, learn about efforts to reduce and prevent them, and start to understand the long-term consequences of ACEs, the associations between ACEs and Executive Functioning, health risk behaviors, and chronic conditions. The committee also intends to introduce bills that will ensure that other groups that encounter youth, such as youth services organizations, school boards, law enforcement, and staff in the juvenile justice system are trained in ACEs.

Last year, our federal government intentionally traumatized thousands of children through the “zero tolerance,” family separation. While that policy is no longer in effect, the impacts remain and will continue to harm those if left unaddressed. For this reason, we introduced A.7815-B (2019) to offer a range of supports and services to unaccompanied minor children who have been placed with a sponsor in New York State. These services will include health and behavioral health services under Child Health Plus (CHP), counseling sessions with social workers, legal services, language services, employment assistance, bilingual support groups, and enrollment in public school. Providers that administer this support will receive trauma-informed training to assist unaccompanied minors who may have experienced adverse childhood experiences.

Overall, the Social Services Committee has a wide net of policy initiatives that we plan to implement and support this upcoming session. These programs will greatly help some of New York State’s most vulnerable individuals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Hevesi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct loop at the end.

Andrew Hevesi, Chair
Committee on Social Services

**2019 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Andrew D. Hevesi
Chair**

Committee Members

Majority

Jeffrion L. Aubry
Charles Barron
Maritza Davila
Simcha Eichenstein
Nathalia Fernandez
Pamela Hunter
Latoya Joyner
Ron Kim
Victor Pichardo
Karines Reyes
Daniel Rosenthal
Michaëlle Solages

Minority

Mark Walczyk (Ranker)
Andrew Goodell
Michael LiPetri
John Salka
Daniel G. Stec

Committee Staff

Rebecca Rasmussen, Committee Clerk

Program and Counsel Staff

Jennifer Sacco, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Jennifer Marrero, Principal Analyst
Janice Nieves, Counsel
Sarah Conklin, Executive Secretary

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Social Services Committee has jurisdiction over legislation affecting programs providing financial 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.

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

OTDA 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.

The Legislature enacted the Social Services Law to authorize the administration of basic temporary assistance and emergency support programs statewide. The local Departments of Social Services (DSS), or Human Resource Administration (HRA) in New York City, implement the Social Service Law to provide temporary help to individuals and families with their economic and social services needs to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. These programs include 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) - FA is a federally funded temporary assistance (TA) program 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.
- Safety Net Assistance (SNA) - established by the Welfare Reform Act (WRA) of 1997 to provide assistance to individuals and families who are ineligible for Family Assistance (FA) or other federal temporary assistance programs. The SNA program is comprised of cash and non-cash components.
- 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 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 designed 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 (EAA) - are grants to assist aged, blind or disabled individuals and couples who have been determined eligible for or are receiving Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) 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 - 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 grant to individuals and couples who are aged, blind, or disabled.

Homeless Services

Local social services districts also have a responsibility to provide services and assistance to individuals in an effort to prevent homelessness, to meet the temporary housing and other immediate needs of eligible homeless persons, and to assist homeless persons in securing permanent housing. Individuals eligible for such assistance are those who are both homeless and eligible for TA.

Domestic Violence

The federal Wellstone-Murray Family Violence Option allows states to address the safety needs of domestic violence victims and their children within the state's TANF plan. The Family Violence Option includes procedures for screening for domestic violence, assessment, service referrals, and temporary waivers of TA requirements which would place the victim at further risk.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

New York administers the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which issues monthly benefits that can be used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. 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.

Any person has the right to file an application for a type of temporary assistance or care with the local social services district at any time. Each applicant for services is required to meet all eligibility requirements in order to receive benefits. OTDA has created a website, mybenefits.ny.gov, where individuals are able to learn about available benefits and the requirements to receive such benefits.

II. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION – 2019

A. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human Trafficking Taskforce

A.7591 (Reyes)/ S.5858 (Persaud)

This Task Force was originally created in 2007 and charged with the coordination and implementation of the new human trafficking law, as well as studying issues that may need further reform, including ensuring that victims are properly protected, and assisting in collecting data on the extent of trafficking in the state and recommending best practices for training and community outreach to help law enforcement, social service providers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the general public to recognize trafficking situations. The Task Force was also charged with measuring and evaluating the state's progress in preventing trafficking and prosecuting persons engaged in such trafficking. This bill extends duties of the Task Force until 2021.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 228.

B. INCOME MAINTENANCE

Health Care Practitioners and Disability Determinations

A.4236 (Hevesi)/S.4641 (Persaud)

The federal government recognizes the importance of giving sufficient consideration to a physician's medical opinion, and follows this practice in SSI determinations, detailed in 20 CFR 416.927. Under New York State law, currently, there is little to no consideration given to the treating health care practitioner's opinion when an individual applying for PA has work limitations, disabilities or health issues that have been identified by their treating health care practitioner. This bill would require physicians of local social service districts who examine PA applicants or recipients for possible work limitations and/or exemptions due to a potential disability, to consider the recipient's/applicant's treating health care practitioner's diagnosis as controlling when making a determination.

Veto Message 179.

Conciliation Process

A.2455-A (Hunter)/S.3840-A (May)

In an effort to assist public assistance recipients stay focused on their work activities, A.2455-A 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 re-engaging 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 would also help the recipients by removing durational sanctions in the rest of the state, as is the current practice in New York City, to allow them to re-engage with their work activity as soon as possible so they can receive the full benefit.

Veto Message 215.

Unearned Income of a Child
A.4256-A (Hevesi)/S.4809-A (Persaud)

This bill would address disparities that exist when a minor is named on an application for public assistance. Current law requires a minor's parents and any other minor siblings living in the home to also apply for assistance and be included in the household for purposes of determining both eligibility and grant amount. This means that the income of any child, such as child support or social security survivor's benefits, is considered available to the entire household, and reduces the entire grant of the household making far fewer resources available for the care of the child applying for assistance, as well as any other children in the household.

Veto Message 164.

Qualified Tuition Program
A.5016 (Titus)/S.1089 (Persaud)

This bill exempts funds in a qualified 529 tuition account when determining the household income for a public assistance benefit.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 323.

Income for the Summer Youth Employment Program
A.6753-A (Eichenstein)/S. 6443 (Persaud)

In 2018, about 75,000 young people gained valuable work experience through the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). For certain young people whose families rely on public benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), their family's benefit could be reduced as a result of the additional income from SYEP. This reduction could have a serious impact on some families, and make them reluctant to allow their children to participate in career-enhancing programs. This bill would require local social services district to exempt the earned income of a dependent child while participating in the SYEP when determining the need for public assistance and allows each local social service districts to exempt income for youth participating in the SYEP up to the age of 24.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 544.

Resource Exceptions
A.7603 (Hevesi)/S.6314 (Persaud)

This legislation ensures that families can retain essential assets while remaining eligible for PA by expending the current law regarding exemptions for two years, which are used when determining a family's financial eligibility for PA. If the existing provision were not extended, the type and amount of exemptions will be left to regulatory action by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance subject to the approval of the Division of the Budget, potentially disrupting the stability of the current list of exemptions.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 213.

NY ABLE Accounts
A.7817 (Hevesi)/S.5402 (Persaud)

NY ABLE accounts help individuals save and pay for expenses and services that are not necessarily covered by Medicaid or disability benefits. Funds withdrawn or transferred from NY ABLE accounts are for the sole use of the beneficiary for qualified expenses only. This bill would provide a statutory exemption of NY ABLE savings account balances from resource and asset test calculations of public assistance applicants and recipients. These accounts are already exempt under state regulations and agency guidance.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 329.

C. OTHER LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Expands Domestic Violence Crimes
A.5608 (Weinstein)/ S.2625 (Lanza)

We know that in addition to physical and psychological tactics, abusers employ economic means to control and otherwise abuse their victims making it harder for victims to secure their safety. Recognizing economic abuse as a form of domestic abuse, in 2013 via Chapter 526, New York enacted changes to the family offense laws of New York State to add certain forms of economic abuse to the definition of a family offense. At the time, the Social Services Law was inadvertently not amended. This bill would address this issue by expanding the definition of “victims of domestic violence” to include identify theft, grand larceny and coercion.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 153.

Suspension of Driving Privileges
A.7788 (Bichotte)/S.6388 (S. Persaud)

Local social services districts in conjunction with the Department of Motor Vehicles are authorized to suspend the driver’s license of an individual that is delinquent in child support payments. This legislation extends this provision until June 30, 2019.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 169.

III. SFY 2019-20 STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

A. 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 on recipients. The cornerstone of the law was the creation of the TANF block grant, which provides states funds for their cash assistance and welfare-to-work programs.

New York received \$2.442 billion for the Family Assistance program through the federal TANF block grant. The 2019-20 state budget included approximately \$1.5 billion to support benefit payments to low-income New Yorkers.

B. TANF Programs and Allocations

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 from poverty 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% of the federal poverty level.

The 2019-20 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 SFY 2019-20:

CHILD CARE INVESTMENTS

The child care subsidy program provided by local social services districts enables an income-eligible parent or caretaker to work or engage in other approved activities by helping parent(s)/caretaker(s) to pay some or all of the cost of child care services. A \$310 million block grant was included in the budget to provide subsidies to parents.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITIONAL INITIATIVES

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 or TANF

work participation activities. Funds are also used to extend the WATS service hours to accommodate employees at Kraft. RGRTA was awarded \$82,000 in the budget.

Summer Youth Employment Program (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 on employment, including work ethic, appropriate workplace behavior, interaction with co-workers and supervisors, receiving a paycheck and money management are learned. \$40 million was allocated to fund the employment program.

Domestic Violence Screening: Domestic Violence Screening involves identifying persons who are currently victims of domestic violence and offering temporary waivers from the 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. \$750,000 was budgeted to provide these services.

Wage Subsidy Program: Employers are reimbursed for wages and related benefits that the employer paid to the participant during the subsidy period. Using wage subsidies as a hiring incentive, nonprofit agencies work with employers to develop positions for individuals who have been unable to find employment through conventional means. This program was allocated \$475,000 to provide subsidies.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

ACCESS – Welfare to Careers: Metropolitan College's Welfare-to-Careers Consortium Program is 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. \$800,000 was allocated for the ACCESS program.

Disability Advocacy Program: This program provides for the legal representation of individuals whose federal disability benefits have been denied or may be discontinued and received **\$3.63** million in this year's budget.

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 that are funded with the Federal TANF Services Block Grant. The SFY 2019-20 allocations for FFFS is \$964 million.

APPENDIX A

2019 SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS
REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON

SOCIAL SERVICES

ASSEMBLY SENATE TOTAL
BILLS BILLS BILLS

BILLS REPORTED FAVORABLE TO:

FLOOR	3	0	3
WAYS AND MEANS	20	0	20
CODES	3	0	3
RULES	1	0	1
JUDICIARY	0	0	0
TOTAL	27	0	27

COMMITTEE ACTION

HELD FOR CONSIDERATION	3	0	3
ENACTING CLAUSES STRICKEN	1	0	1
DEFEATED	0	0	0
REMAINING BILLS IN COMMITTEE	76	4	80
TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD	5		

APPENDIX B

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

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.110 Rosenthal, L		Referred to Codes	Would require any provider of temporary housing assistance to have trained an employee on duty at all times to administer a opioid antagonist. Twice a year all providers of temporary housing assistance would be required to offer training to all individuals residing in shelter on how to administer opioid antagonists. This training would be provided by a registered opioid overdoes prevention program.
A.686 Rosenthal, L		Referred to Ways and Means	Would provide feminine hygiene products to females that need them in homeless shelters, excluding shelters in NYC.
A.1283 Hunter	S.3465 Biaggi	Veto Memo 240	Would require public transportation workers, who have direct contact with customers, to be trained in recognizing possible victims of human trafficking.
A.1620 Hevesi	S.2375 Krueger	Referred to Ways and Means	Would create the Home Stability Support (HSS) program. HSS would be a new statewide rent supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions.
A.1867 Simon	S.722 Montgomery	Referred to Ways and Means	Would require local social services 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.2167 Barron	S.5731 Krueger	Referred to Ways and Means	Would eliminate the requirement to have a lien placed on a home as condition of eligibility for public assistance.
A.2381 Hevesi	S.5471 Gounardes	Referred to Ways and Means	Would provide that residential domestic violence providers be reimbursed by New York State for any payment differential for housing a single individual in a room intended for double occupancy in order to address the system-wide lack of shelter for single adults.

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.2455-A Hunter	S.3840-A May	Veto Memo 215	Would require local social services districts outside of New York City, prior to imposing a sanction on a PA recipient for failure to comply with work rules, to confirm that the recipient is not exempt from the work requirement, and that the recipient had appropriate child care, transportation, and disability accommodations.
A.3110 Jaffee	S.1546 Kennedy	Referred to Ways and Means	Would standardize the child care co-payments across the state to be no greater than 20% of a families earned income above the poverty level.
A.3838 Dickens	S.4923 Parker	Third Reading Calendar	Would require applicants for public assistance to be fully informed that they may be liable to reimburse the state for benefits received.
A.4181 Hevesi	S.5753 Ramos	Referred to Ways and Means	Would increase the standard of need allowance for individuals and families residing in a homeless shelter that provide 3 meals a day.
A.4236 Hevesi	S.4641 Persaud	Veto Memo 179	Would require that in instances where a certified DSS practitioner is evaluating an applicant, the opinion of the applicant's treating physician be considered controlling in the determination, and that any denial must include a written explanation that presents evidence to support the certified practitioner's differing opinion.
A.4256A Hevesi	S.4809A Persaud	Veto Memo 164	Would allow a caregiver to exclude any unearned income of a child from the public assistance household.
A.4269 Hevesi		Referred to Ways and Means	Would require each local social service district to assist an individual with HIV/AIDS to secure needed paperwork for eligibility for assistance, face-to-face interviews and provide referrals for services. Would also require OTDA to work with DOH to make sure the DOH website has the most update to date information regarding resources and services for this population throughout state.
A.5016 Titus	S.1089 Persaud	Chapter 323	Would exempt funds in a qualified 529 tuition account when determining the household income for a public assistance benefit.
A.5608 Weinstein	S.2625 Lanza	Chapter 153	Would make the corresponding changes that were made to the Family Court Act regarding the expansion of certain crimes against victim of domestic violence to include identity theft, grand larceny and coercion.
A.6753-A Eichenstein	S.6443 Persaud	Chapter 544	Would exempt the earned income of a youth while participating, up to the age 24, in the Summer Youth Employment Program when determining the need for public assistance.

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.6778-A Hevesi	S.5713 Persaud	Referred to Ways and Means	Would increase the personal needs allowance provided to residents in adult care facilities.
A.6782 Fahy	S.5810 Montgomery	Referred to Ways and Means	Would allow individuals on public assistance who are exempt from work activities due to recently giving birth or about to give birth, to be eligible to receive home visiting services. The local social services districts shall provide information about home visiting services to eligible individuals. This bill would also allow home visiting services to count toward an individual's work requirement.
A.7095 Hevesi	S.5594 Kavanagh	Referred to Ways and Means	Would provide a financial incentive to landlords who enter into rental agreements or leases with homeless individuals or/and homeless families. The landlord would commit to maintaining housing quality standards, which are established by local housing codes. Financial incentive: \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for families.
A.7591 Reyes	S.5858 Persaud	Chapter 228	Would extend for 2 years the interagency task force on human trafficking and the duties and meeting requirements of the task force.
A.7602-A Weinstein		Referred to Rules	Would make a number of changes to process by which the support collection unit (SCU) transfers undisbursed funds to the State Comptroller's Office of Unclaimed Funds.
A.7603 Hevesi	S.6314 Persaud	Chapter 213	Provides for the extension of current exemptions of income and resources to qualify for public assistance programs.
A.7788 Bichotte	S.6388 Persaud	Chapter 169	Provides for an extension authorizing local social services districts, in conjunction with the Department of Motor Vehicles, to suspend the driver's license of an individual that is delinquent in child support payments.
A.7803 Hevesi	S.6856 Sanders	Referred to Ways and Means	Would require OTDA to contract with one or more not-for-profit providers to provide outreach services to SSP applicants and recipients as it relates to applying for, modifying, or maintaining benefits. The not for-profit provider would be required to provide a report annually to the Governor and the legislature on their findings related to the outreach they've performed.

ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR	SENATE BILL # SPONSOR	FINAL ACTION	DESCRIPTION
A.7815-B Hevesi	S.6225-B Biaggi	Passed the Assembly	Would provide mental health services, Child Health Plus (CHP), and legal representation in immigration court to unaccompanied minors in New York. When a child leaves a foster care agency to live with a sponsor in New York State, the foster care agencies will be required to provide the child or the sponsor with information detailing supports and services that the child will be eligible to receive in New York. This bill also establishes immigration services liaisons within the Office for New Americans (ONA).
A.7817 Hevesi	S.5402 Persaud	Chapter 329	Would exempt or disregard funds in a New York Achieving a Better Life Experience (NY ABLE) savings account from assets limit tests to qualify or recertify for public assistance.

APPENDIX C

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS/ROUNDTABLES

Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI)

Monday, December 16, 2019

Buffalo, New York

In the 2016-17 enacted state budget, the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI), a new holistic and integrated approach to poverty was established in 16 counties across the state with the goal of identifying the major contributing factors to poverty and implementing strategies to alleviate such poverty in some of the poorest counties in the state. The hearing gathered information about the work being done by the many different nonprofit groups that are part of the ESPRI with a specific focus on effective strategies and services that have been implemented to alleviate poverty. Transportation, housing and child care are among the top barriers in many of the ESPRI communities. Many stakeholders testified to the success of collaborating with other organizations, the importance of mentors/caseworkers/coaches in providing essential support services on an individualized basis, and the need for financial services.

Stakeholders stressed the need for more time to truly demonstrate the effectiveness of strategies developed to address poverty and systemic barriers in their communities. In addition to more time, continued funding is also needed. Many organizations are just getting their programs underway, so a continued funding stream would enable them to demonstrate the impact of the strategies for long term success to truly address the barriers that remain in communities.