



150 State Street, 4th Floor
Albany, New York 12207

Voice 518-463-1896
Fax 518-463-3364
www.scaany.org

Karen Schimke
President and CEO

**Memorandum in Support
A. 3657 (Scarborough)**

The Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA) strongly supports A. 3657, which would reduce barriers to accessing child care for low-income families.

A. 3657 would amend the Social Services Law so that, while applicants for or recipients of child care assistance would be encouraged to obtain a child support order, no applicant or recipient would be required to pursue a court order for child support as a condition of eligibility for child care assistance.

SCAA agrees with this stance. While custodial parents should be encouraged to seek support orders from non-contributing parents, there are important reasons why vulnerable, low-income families do not seek such support. Sometimes a fragile relationship exists with the non-custodial parent that will quickly be severed when a court order is sought. In other instances, not seeking a court order has been important for the safety of the custodial parent, as in cases where domestic violence has occurred.

This non-statutory requirement has already begun to have a devastating impact on low-income women and their children, as well as on the child care system as a whole. Child care resource and referral (CCR&R) network members across the state report that child care providers are witnessing families leaving subsidized regulated care to seek alternative venues of care for their children. CCR&R network members further state that a significant number of child care programs have closed as a result of the loss of children to the regulated system, a by-product that negatively impacts the early care and education system as a whole.

This legislation is an important step toward helping some low-income families afford child care, which will allow them to work while providing their children with early learning opportunities in safe settings. Thank you for helping to amend the current requirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Karen Schimke'.

President & CEO
SCAA

Dated: February 10, 2009

For further information, please contact me at 518/463-1896, ext. 25.