



c/o SCAA
150 State Street, 4th Floor
Albany, New York 12207
voice 518-463-1896
fax 518-463-3364
email dmastin@scaany.org
www.newyorkcan.org

October 16, 2008

Honorable David Paterson
Governor of New York
Executive Chamber, State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

The New York Children's Action Network (New York CAN) appreciates the leadership you have demonstrated during this fiscal crisis. Your comments remind us that New York must absorb a large share of the loss during a national downturn because of our unique relationship with the financial sector. As advocates, we acknowledge the severity of the coming budget cuts and understand that there must be shared solutions to this crisis. *We also urge you to exercise extreme caution as you consider cuts so that the long term welfare of children is not sacrificed to the need to achieve immediate cost savings.*

Our children must be protected. Across the board cuts affect our most vulnerable populations disproportionately, particularly children. We urge you to protect their interests, keep them safe, and provide for their needs. Critical services or programs for children must be held harmless. Cuts in such services can be counter productive and even fatal. We know that evidenced based, proven practices save in the long run and lead to healthy development.

We urge that you consider other areas for targeted cuts, areas which have not shown the outcomes we desire for our children. Consider the elimination or reduction of underutilized programs including juvenile justice facilities, state prisons, and other institutions with excess capacity. Some of the cost savings should be reinvested into community based services which lead to better outcomes for our children, youth, and their families.

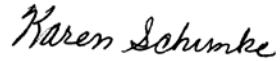
In addition, we urge you to explore long-term fiscal improvements such as an examination of public authority spending and consolidation of duplicative administrative structures at the state level. Further cost savings can be achieved through hiring freezes and reduction in the use of consultants. Solutions should preserve services, prevent layoffs and include revenue enhancements.

Attached please find the 2008-09 New York CAN agenda, which stresses that "hard times are harder on children" and calls for the creation of a Children's Budget. Such a budget could direct decisions at a time like this by tracking expenditures with outcomes achieved.

We implore you to examine alternate ways to address the state's fiscal condition. Across-the-board cuts will not serve the purpose of reducing the deficit, and will not serve the children of New York.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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

Karen Schimke
Convener, New York CAN

cc: Laura L. Anglin
Joseph Baker
Gladys A. Carrion
David J. Hansell
Kristin Proud
Dennis Whalen