

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 31, 2014

**Contact:** Lauren Tobias  
(518) 463-1896, ext. 138  
[ltobias@scaany.org](mailto:ltobias@scaany.org)

**Fast Track Budget Yields Mixed Results**

The Governor and Legislature appear to be on-target to achieve another on-time State budget. Whether it is a good budget for New Yorkers, especially those living on the margins, is questionable.

**Health Coverage Gets Better**

The Basic Health Program included in the budget will allow the State to move forward to make quality health insurance coverage and access more affordable for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. The program will provide coverage for New Yorkers who do not qualify for Medicaid, but who may find health insurance on the Exchange too expensive. People who have health insurance will be protected against surprise bills from “out-of-network” providers and the budget requires important “aid continuing” protections for Medicaid managed care plan members when they appeal a denial of services. Schuyler’s CEO, Kate Breslin, says “The final budget enacts important health coverage expansions and protections that advance New York’s standing as a national leader in ensuring health coverage and access.”

**Pre-K: Good Headline, Devil in Detail**

The headline of \$340 million for Pre-K is significant, with a weighty \$300 million of it just for NYC, but the accompanying, extremely complex budget language may hamper districts, especially those outside of NYC and with tight budgets, from being able to actually expand access to Pre-K for four-year-olds. “The proof will be in the pudding,” says Kate Breslin, CEO of the Schuyler Center, “Will we see a significant increase in the number of four-year-olds across New York State entering full-day, high quality Pre-K this fall?”

**In Addition**

The final budget provides an additional \$34 million for child care subsidies for low-income working families, which will still be a long way from meeting the need. A welcome addition to the budget is a policy change that allows foster care youth to take full advantage of the maximum Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award, an issue that has been on Schuyler’s agenda for several years.

The Governor and Legislative leaders made comments leading up to this budget deadline about the importance of an on-time budget but that a ‘good’ budget is more important than an ‘on-time’ budget. The Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy strongly agrees that more attention needs to be given to assuring that New York’s budget is a ‘good’ budget that strengthens families and addresses the State’s growing income inequality.

# # #