

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **The Child Care Availability Task Force Must Develop a Bold Plan So that All Working New York Families Have Equitable Access to High-Quality, Affordable Child Care**

More than 80 child advocates, child care providers, parents, faith, labor and business leaders delivered a letter today to Governor Cuomo urging that the Child Care Availability Task Force – set to hold its inaugural meeting next week – develop a “comprehensive plan to restructure and improve the state’s child care system.”

Bi-partisan legislation establishing the Child Care Availability Task Force was passed by the New York State Legislature in June 2017 after the state had cut funding for child care subsidies for low income families, leading to widespread criticism and a call for system-wide reform. On December 12, 2018, the Task Force is set to have its inaugural meeting.

Child care in New York is among the most expensive in the nation, costing an average of \$15,000 per year for full-day center-based care. This high cost creates significant economic hardship for working New York families and is an impediment to employment. A single parent working full time at \$15.00 an hour (higher than the minimum wage in most of the state) would earn an annual salary of \$31,000; with only one child, that parent could be required to spend as much as 50% of her income on child care. For many New York families with young children, child care is their largest monthly bill. Yet, due to the shortage of child care subsidies and other supports, [approximately 80%](#) of low-income working families must shoulder these high costs alone – or not work. The letter calls on the Task Force to be bold, saying “it is essential for the economic security of our families, and the well-being of our children, that all working New York families have equitable access to high-quality child care, regardless of income, race, or ethnicity.”

The letter also calls on the Task Force to consider how to ensure high-quality care by “supporting the child care workforce.” According to providers and educators, high staff turnover due to low pay, particularly among those who care for infants and toddlers, is eroding quality. Meanwhile, child care providers are struggling to stay open as evidenced by the report, [National Child Care Deserts](#), released today showing 64% of New Yorkers live in a child care desert.

The letter cautions Task Force members that “small measures and quick fixes will not meaningfully expand access to the thousands of New York families that need it, nor build a well-supported, stable early childhood workforce” and urged them instead to create a comprehensive plan that could “spur economic growth, ensure our State’s children receive high quality care that readies them for kindergarten and build on the success of paid family leave to position New York State as the best place in our nation to raise a family.”

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