



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 560

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.4924/A.1303, to remove the minimum wage and hours requirements for applicants of child care assistance.

By Council Members Menin, Cabán, Stevens, Gutiérrez, Riley, Yeger, Restler, Hudson, Hanif, Ung, Brewer, Lee, Velázquez, De La Rosa and Rivera

Whereas, Children enrolled in quality child care programs exhibit reduced aggressive behavior, have lower risk of criminal justice system involvement, lower blood pressure, higher IQ, healthier behaviors, lower rates of grade repetition, reduced need for expensive remedial and special education, higher high school graduation rates, higher college attendance rates, higher labor force participation rates, strengthened families, and higher lifetime earnings, and the lifetime earnings of their parents also increase; and

Whereas, Expanding access to quality, affordable child care not only benefits individual families, it also makes good sense for the economy as a whole, because research demonstrates that each dollar invested in child care generates a 13 percent return; and

Whereas, Children from low-income families and minority population groups are less likely to be enrolled in quality, structured child care programs; and

Whereas, In the United States, as of 2018, there were 23,691,475 children aged 5 years and younger, with 63 percent residing in households in which all parents work, and with 19 percent living in families below the poverty line; and

Whereas, Compared to other developed nations, the United States lags behind in public spending for child care, presently devoting less than 0.5 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to child care; and

Whereas, Nationally, as of July 2020, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, many states lost more than 25

percent of their child care capacity, making quality child care more expensive due to lower provider-to-child ratios and higher personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies costs, which providers likely pass along to parents, who are already struggling to keep pace with inflation-induced escalating cost-of-living expenses; and

Whereas, Nationally, during the pandemic, among parents of children under the age of 5 years, 47 percent were concerned about their ability to afford child care upon return to work, and almost 20 percent reported working less hours in order to provide child care; and

Whereas, Even prior to the pandemic, it was estimated that inadequate access to quality, affordable child care costs the United States \$57 billion in annual losses, including \$37 billion due to reduced productivity at work and more time looking for work, \$13 billion from reduced revenues and extra recruitment costs for businesses, and \$7 billion due to working parents being in lower income tax brackets and paying less sales tax; and

Whereas, In New York State, the New York State Child Care Assistance Program, commonly known as the Subsidy Program, is administered by local social services districts and overseen by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services; and

Whereas, For the 2021-2022 New York State Fiscal Year, \$832 million were allocated to local districts for the New York State Child Care Assistance Program; and

Whereas, In New York State, in Fiscal Year 2021, about 103,000 children from 60,000 families received child care subsidies, with roughly 66,000 children from 39,000 families receiving child care subsidies each month; and

Whereas, Of these 103,000 children, approximately 62 percent were in New York City, nearly 35 percent were in families receiving Temporary Assistance, and 65 percent, while not Temporary Assistance recipients, were categorized as low-income cases; and

Whereas, In New York City, after March 2020, over 50 percent of families with children experienced a

loss of employment income due to cuts to wages or work hours, furlough, or a job loss; and

Whereas, As a result, between April 2020 and July 2021, 43 percent of New York City households with children experienced difficulties meeting their usual weekly expenses, 15 percent of such families sometimes or often did not have enough to eat, 31 percent of renter households with children were behind on their rental payments, and of those families with rental arrears, about 40 percent believed that eviction from their apartment was somewhat or very likely; and

Whereas, Between April 2020 and July 2021, 41 percent of New York City women with children reported being unemployed, and as many as 35 percent of such women indicated caring for children as the cause of their unemployment; and

Whereas, New York State law requires applicants for child care subsidies to work a minimum number of hours each week and to be paid no less than the minimum wage; and

Whereas, New York State law's minimum wage requirement operates to exclude applicants for child care subsidies who are employed in certain occupations, such as home health aides, whose total hours worked often exceed compensated hours; workers in the gig economy; and workers who are misclassified and earning less than the minimum wage, among others; and

Whereas, With the intent of remedying the exclusion of some categories of workers from child care assistance, State Senator Jessica Ramos introduced S.4924 in the New York State Senate, and Assembly Member Sarah Clark introduced companion bill A.1303 in the New York State Assembly, which would eliminate minimum wage or hours requirements for applicants of child care assistance; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.4924/A.1303, to remove the minimum wage and hours requirements for applicants of child care assistance.

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03/16/2023
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