

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY • SHELDON SILVER, SPEAKER



2014 ANNUAL REPORT



Committee on
Social Services

Michele Titus, Chair



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

MICHELE R. TITUS
Assemblywoman 31st District
Queens County

REPLY TO:
19-31 Mott Avenue Suite 301
Far Rockaway, NY 11691
718-327-1845
FAX 718-327-1878

131-17 Rockaway Boulevard
South Ozone Park, NY 11420
718-322-4958
FAX 718-322-5267
titusm@assembly.state.ny.us

Room 844
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
518-455-5668
FAX 518-455-3892

CHAIR
Legislative Women's Caucus

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The Honorable Sheldon Silver
Speaker of the Assembly
Room 932
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248

December 15, 2014

Dear Speaker Silver:

On behalf of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, I respectfully submit to you the Committee's 2014 Annual Report. The Committee secured enactment of policies and continued investments in programs that will help low-income individuals and families achieve greater economic security, thereby providing enhanced opportunities for them to escape poverty.

The 2014-15 budget process provided a vital opportunity for the Committee to initiate several positive changes to the state's social welfare system. To help secure a more economically vibrant and secure New York, legislation was advanced allowing four-year post-secondary education to count toward an individual's work requirement for public assistance. This legislation will have undeniable long-term positive effects for children and their parents, who will now have an opportunity to obtain a better education. Providing adults with this opportunity will directly benefit the family income, which in turn will help to reduce the levels of child poverty.

In an effort to help reduce potential financial instability for public assistance recipients, the Committee successfully negotiated the removal of language from the Governor's budget that would place durational sanctions on recipients that accessed public assistance grants in certain locations. Durational sanctions place an already financially unstable family in an even more precarious situation by reducing their monthly allocations. Removing durational sanctions was an important priority for the Assembly to continue to help New York's low-income families.

It was also very exciting to include language in the enacted State Budget that each person living with clinical/symptomatic HIV illness or AIDS in New York City who is receiving HIV/AIDS public assistance, would not be required to pay more than 30% of his or her income towards rent. This has been a long-standing priority for the Assembly and seeing it come to fruition will ensure that individuals suffering with this debilitating disease will no longer have to make the choice between their rent or their much needed medications.

New York is one of two states that still require a lien to be placed on a recipient's home as a condition of eligibility for public assistance. In addition to this archaic requirement, most recipients were unaware of the fact that they are responsible for reimbursing the state for benefits received. Nor were they provided with a proper accounting of the amount of public assistance benefits paid to them and credits received on an annual basis. In order to ensure public assistance recipients understand their responsibilities, language was included in the Enacted Budget. Local social services districts are now required to provide the recipient with documentation notifying them about the requirements to reimburse the districts as well as a detailed account of the amount of public assistance benefits the individual has received, and repairs and taxes paid on the property by the district.

The Committee was also successful in advocating for funding for many crucial support programs that assist individuals to achieve economic independence such as Career Pathways, ATTAIN, Wheels for Work, Settlement Houses, emergency homeless needs, and other crucial intervention programs.

During the 2014 session, the Committee continued its focus to combat homelessness by ensuring that the record numbers of children and adults facing homelessness have access to safe and permanent housing. The Committee continues to examine how to best utilize federal, state, and local funds to comprehensively address the issue of homelessness. Additionally, the Enacted Budget authorized New York City to utilize TANF funding to create a rental subsidy program for homeless people living in New York City upon state approval.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and leadership throughout the past session. I look forward to working with you and all of our colleagues in the Assembly in the 2015 legislative session in order to protect and improve vital services that provide a path to self-sufficiency for some of the most vulnerable populations of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Titus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a stylized "T".

Michele Titus
Chair
Committee on Social Services

**2014 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Michele Titus
Chair**

Committee Members

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Jeffrion L. Aubry
Alec Brook-Krasny
Maritza Davila
Ron Kim
Charles D. Lavine
Shelly Mayer
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Michaëlle Solages
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Kenneth Blankenbush
Anthony H. Palumbo
Daniel Stec
Claudia Tenney

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Claude Nelson, Committee Clerk

Program and Counsel Staff

Simonia Brown, Senior Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Jennifer Marrero, Analyst
Jennifer Sacco, Counsel
Alexis Conti, Committee Assistant
Terri Zaleski, Executive Secretary

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Social Services Committee has jurisdiction over legislation affecting programs providing financial and support services to indigent households in New York State. The work of the Committee also affects the aged, blind, and disabled residing in the community and in residential care facilities. The statutory basis for these programs is contained in the State Social Services Law.

The Committee works with the Committees on Health, Children and Families, Aging, Labor, Housing, and the Task Force on Homelessness. The Committee has legislative oversight responsibilities for programs administered by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

OTDA is responsible for supervising programs that provide assistance and support to eligible families and individuals in the state. Some of OTDA's functions include: providing temporary cash assistance; providing assistance in paying for food; providing heating assistance; overseeing New York State's child support enforcement program; determining certain aspects of eligibility for Social Security Disability benefits; supervising homeless housing and services programs; and providing assistance to certain immigrant populations.

The Legislature enacted the Social Services Law to authorize the administration of basic temporary assistance and emergency support programs statewide. The local Departments of Social Services (DSS), or Human Resource Administration (HRA) in New York City, implement the Social Service Law to provide temporary help to individuals and families with their economic and social services needs to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. These programs include Family Assistance, Safety Net Assistance, Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children, Emergency Assistance for Adults, and certain parts of the Supplemental Security Income Program.

- Family Assistance (FA) - FA is a federally funded temporary assistance (TA) programs for families. FA can only be provided to a family that includes a minor child living with a parent or caretaker relative, or to a pregnant woman. As a TANF-funded program, FA is subject to the state 60-month lifetime limit on assistance.
- Safety Net Assistance (SNA) - established by the Welfare Reform Act (WRA) of 1997 to provide assistance to individuals and families who are ineligible for Family Assistance (FA) or other federal temporary assistance programs. The SNA program is comprised of cash and a non-cash component.
- Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF) - is a federally funded program which provides assistance to deal with crisis situations threatening a family with a child under the age of 18, or under 19 and attending full-time secondary school or the equivalent level of vocational or technical training. EAF is designed to meet needs resulting from a sudden occurrence or a set of circumstances that was unforeseen and beyond the applicant's control that demand immediate attention.
- Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA) - are grants to assist aged, blind or disabled individuals and couples who have been determined eligible for or are receiving Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits or additional state payments and applied for such assistance to meet emergency needs that cannot be met by the regular monthly benefits of SSI and additional state payments.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program- established by Congress in 1974 under Title XVI of the Social Security Act. The Social Security Administration (SSA) administers the

program which provides a Federal grant to individuals and couples who are aged, blind, or disabled.

Homeless Services

Local social services districts also have a responsibility to provide services and assistance to individuals in an effort to prevent homelessness, to meet the temporary housing and other immediate needs of eligible homeless persons, and to assist homeless persons in securing permanent housing. Individuals eligible for such assistance are those who are both homeless and eligible for TA.

Domestic Violence

The federal Wellstone-Murray Family Violence Option allows states to address the safety needs of domestic violence victims and their children within the state's TANF plan. The Family Violence Option includes procedures for screening for domestic violence, assessment, service referrals, and temporary waivers of TA requirements which would place the victim at further risk.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

New York administers the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which issues monthly benefits that can be used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. Benefits are provided through an electronic benefit card, similar to a debit or credit card. Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income, expenses and other factors.

Any person has the right to file an application for a type of temporary assistance or care with the local social services district at any time. Each applicant for services is required to meet all eligibility requirements in order to receive benefits. OTDA has created a website, Mybenefits.com, where individuals are able to learn about available benefits and the requirements to receive such benefits.

II. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION – 2014

A. INCOME MAINTENANCE

1. **Automobile Resource Exemptions** **A.1981 (Titus)/S.3136 (Krueger)**

When an individual or household applies for public assistance, all property and resources must be accounted for in order to determine eligibility. This includes vehicles. Current law provides a subjective two-tier system for determining the eligibility of an applicant if they own a vehicle. An individual may retain his or her vehicle if the vehicle is assessed up to \$4,650. If the individual is using the vehicle to seek or maintain employment the vehicle may be valued up to \$9,300. This bill would standardize the automobile resource exemption and allow all Public Assistance applicants to retain a vehicle worth up to \$9,300. This allows recipients, all of which are subject to work requirements or fall within a short term exception to possess a more dependable form of transportation to travel to work and child care, which in turn allows individuals to become more self-sufficient.

This bill was Held for Consideration in the Ways and Means Committee.

2. **Clarification of the Conciliation Process** **A.2669C (Wright)/S.4830A (Savino)**

In an effort to assist public assistance recipients with staying focused on their work activities, A.2669C would streamline conciliation processes by focusing on re-engaging the client. Under the current process, even when the recipient misses just one appointment, the local social services district is required to expend time and resources focused on sanctioning the client rather than reengaging the client in work activities as soon as possible. Not only would this bill enable the local social services districts to focus time and resources on the key goal of engagement, but this bill also helps the recipients meet the necessary requirements to receive benefits.

This bill was reported and advanced to Third Calendar Reading.

3. **Public Assistance (PA) Residency Restriction Repealer** **A.2767 (Wright)**

Social Services Law requires New York to temporarily provide lower benefits to new residents. Specifically, it states that PA given to a person during his or her first 12 months as a state resident shall not exceed the greater of 50% of the amount otherwise payable or the standard of need to which such person was entitled in the state in which the person resided immediately before moving to New York.

New York, along with 15 other states, adopted such policies in response to federal welfare reform legislation of 1996. However, in 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the California law establishing such a two-tiered benefit provision violated a citizen's constitutional "right to travel." An individual, if otherwise eligible, may receive PA and care if such individual is a resident of New York State. An individual is considered a resident of

New York if such person is living in the state and intends to remain permanently or indefinitely.

This bill would repeal the section of law which provides for reduced PA benefits during the first year a person becomes a New York State resident. By eliminating this provision, this bill would make it abundantly clear that new residents are entitled to the same benefits as other residents and would ensure that the constitutional rights of every citizen of the state are being preserved.

This bill was Held for Consideration by the Ways & Means Committee.

**4. Waiting Period for Safety Net Assistance (SNA)
A.2837 (Wright)**

Under New York law, a person applying for SNA must wait 45 days to receive assistance. This provision actually penalizes people who take temporary, seasonal or short term employment because when those jobs end, applicants must wait 45 days after applying for SNA before receiving anything other than emergency assistance, which must be repaid. To achieve parity with the state's Family Assistance policy, this bill would require social services districts to accept or deny an application no later than 30 days after the date of the application.

This bill was reported to the Ways and Means Committee.

**5. Health Care Practitioners and Disability Determinations
A.2960 (Wright)/S.428 (Dilan)**

The federal government recognizes the importance of giving sufficient consideration to a physician's medical opinion, and follows this practice in SSI determination treating procedures, detailed in 20 CFR 416.927. Under New York State law, currently, there is little to no consideration given to the treating health care practitioner's opinion when an individual applying for PA has work limitations, disabilities or health issues that have been identified by their treating health care practitioner. This bill would require physicians of local social service districts who examine PA applicants or recipients for possible work limitations and/or exemptions due to a potential disability, to consider the recipient's/applicant's treating health care practitioner's diagnosis when making a determination.

This bill passed the Assembly.

**6. Requests for a Fair Hearing
A.3404 (Wright)**

Under existing law, an applicant for or recipient of public assistance is permitted to contest a determination of disability or the suitability of a work assignment through the fair hearing process. In almost all cases, applicants and recipients have 60 days in which to request a fair hearing. However, current law only provides an individual with 10 days to request a fair hearing based upon a disability determination or unsuitability of a work assignment.

It is unreasonable to substantially reduce the time allotted to public assistance applicants and recipients with disabilities. Public assistance recipients with disabilities are frequently assigned to work activities that are either difficult to perform given their medical condition or hazardous to their health. These individuals are rarely able to meet the 10-day deadline to request a fair hearing because they are not informed of the specific duties to which they will be assigned until the 10 days have expired. This bill would extend from 10 days to 60 days the time allowed for persons with disabilities to request a fair hearing on the suitability of a work assignment or a disability determination.

This bill was reported to the Ways and Means Committee.

**7. Work Activity Exemption
A.6839A (Titus)**

For public assistance (PA) recipients, the Federal law allows a maximum 12-month work exemption for a single-parent head of household with a child under the age of one year old without affecting the state's work participation rates. Currently, New York State allows a 3-month work exemption for recipients of temporary assistance that are single-parent head of households. This bill would require commissioners of local social services districts who are unable to provide a child care subsidy to all eligible working families to offer the 12-month work exemption to single-parent head of households receiving PA with a child under the age of one. The exemption would alleviate some of the financial pressure on counties that have had to cut subsidies to non-TANF households and allow the working families to obtain and continue employment.

This bill passed the Assembly.

**8. Standardization of Child Care Copayments
A.8928 (Russell)**

Families receiving child care subsidies must contribute to the cost of child care, calculated as a percentage of the family's income above the Federal poverty level. This percentage varies from 10% in some counties to 35% in others, and creates a barrier to accessing child care for families that live in counties charging the higher end of the scale. To put this in perspective, in 2013, a family of three who earned \$39,060 annually (200% of the Federal Poverty Level) could pay anywhere between \$1,953 (10% copayment) to \$6,835.50 (35% copayment) per year. Currently, there are at least 25 counties that employ the 35% multiplier when calculating a family's copayment. The cost-sharing requirement can be the deciding factor for whether a family will be able to afford child care, even when provided a subsidy. Such inequities create an unfair burden and prevent access to child care assistance for low-income families.

This bill would create equal access to child care assistance throughout the state by standardizing the amount of the family share. Local social services districts would charge a co-payment of no greater than 20% of the family's income.

This bill passed the Assembly.

B. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

1. Prohibits Work Experience Programs (WEP) in New York State A.7119A (Wright)/S.5120A (Savino)

Since 1996, individuals receiving public assistance are mandated to participate in work activities in order to receive benefits. In New York a local social service district may assign an individual to participate in WEP to satisfy the work activity requirement. WEP assignments usually entail an individual working in the public sector alongside employees earning wages and benefits. Individuals who participate in this program state they feel humiliated and stripped of their dignity because they are working for “free.”

This bill would remove WEP as an acceptable work activity encouraging districts to utilize other activities, such as on-the-job training, vocational training, subsidized or unsubsidized employment or community service to satisfy the work participation requirement.

This bill was reported to the Ways and Means Committee.

2. Homework A.9808 (Titus)

This bill would allow a local social services district to count one hour of homework time per course credit hour towards work participation requirements for public assistance recipients participating in educational or training activities

This bill passed the Assembly.

C. OTHER LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

1. Report on Homeless Services throughout the State A.1744 (Titus)

Homelessness in New York State has reached an all-time high. In New York City alone, more than 60,352 people, including over 25,000 children, sleep in a New York City shelter as of November 2014. In order to acquire a comprehensive view of efforts to battle homelessness in New York State, it is essential that there is an accounting of the programs and services available in each locality. This bill would require each local social services district to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the programs and services for homeless persons living in the district and their funding sources.

This bill passed the Assembly.

2. Work Experience Program (WEP) A.9232 (Titus)/S.167 (Squadron)

A person who receives public assistance in New York State is required to repay the local social services district for the assistance he or she receives either in cash, asset acquisition or by working without pay in exchange for his or her benefits. The recovery of such assistance is expressly authorized against windfalls such as inheritances lawsuit proceeds, lottery winnings, and retroactive SSI awards. Additionally, local districts are entitled to

recover public assistance by requiring applicants who are homeowners to provide the district with a mortgage lien equal to the sum of PA paid to them as a condition of eligibility for assistance. Many local social services districts require that PA recipients participate in WEP for no compensation to “work off their grant,” then seek to recover assistance without crediting the recipient’s time in WEP.

This bill would require local social services districts to credit the value of an individual’s participation in WEP by calculating the number of hours worked times the higher of the state or federal minimum wage applicable at the time, when determining the amount of PA that the local social services district is entitled to recover.

This bill advanced to the Ways and Means Committee.

III. SFY 2014-15 STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

A. Overview of the TANF Block Grant

The nation's welfare system was dramatically reformed with the enactment of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). The federal law adopted a "work first" approach, eliminated the entitlement to cash assistance, and imposed time limits, work requirements and sanctions on recipients. The cornerstone of the law was the creation of the TANF block grant, which provides \$16.5 billion to states to fund their cash assistance and welfare-to-work programs.

New York received \$2.443 billion for the Family Assistance program through the federal TANF block grant. The 2014-15 state budget included approximately \$460 million to support benefit payments to low-income New Yorkers.

B. TANF Programs

New York's TANF program has developed into the state's most critical system of support and assistance for children and families who struggle to make ends meet. In New York, programs including wage supplements, tax credits, job training and skill development, case management and counseling, child care and transportation were developed to assist families in need during the transition from poverty to self-sufficiency through work. For several years, New York has been authorized to utilize TANF funds not only for families eligible for federal assistance through the FA program, but also for families whose income does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The 2014-15 budget included a Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) to provide local districts with a block grant. In order for a program to receive funding out of the TANF surplus, it must meet one of the four TANF purposes:

1. Provide assistance to needy families;
2. End the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
3. Prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Below is a breakdown of State spending of the TANF dollars for the SFY 2014-15:

CHILD CARE INVESTMENTS

The child care subsidy program provided by local social services districts enables an income-eligible parent or caretaker to work or engage in other approved activities by helping parent(s)/caretaker(s) to pay some or all of the cost of child care services. A \$310 million block grant was included in the budget to provide subsidies to parents.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITIONAL INITIATIVES

Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA): This program provides a monthly bus pass to allow eligible individuals from seven member counties to travel to and from work, or to participate in work related activities. In Wayne County, funds are used to support the transportation costs of individuals who use the WATS Demand Response Bus Services or TANF work participation activities. Funds are also used to extend the WATS service hours to

accommodate employees at Kraft. RGRTA was awarded \$82,000 in the budget.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP): The purpose of the TANF SYEP is to provide eligible youth with a quality employment and educational experience during the summer months. For many youth, this is their first introduction to the world of work. Valuable lessons which center on employment, including work ethic, appropriate workplace behavior, interaction with co-workers and supervisors, receiving a paycheck and money management are learned. \$27.5 million was restored to fund the employment program.

Domestic Violence Screening: Domestic Violence Screening involves identifying persons who are currently victims of domestic violence and offering temporary waivers from the public assistance (PA) program requirements where compliance with such requirements would place the victim and/or victim's children at greater risk of harm or make it more difficult for them to escape from abuse. \$2.46 million was budgeted to provide these services.

Wage Subsidy Program: Employers are reimbursed for wages and related benefits that the employer paid to the participant during the subsidy period. Using wage subsidies as a hiring incentive, non-profit agencies work with employers to develop positions for individuals who have been unable to find employment through conventional means. This program was allocated \$950,000 to provide subsidies.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Bridge Program: The Bridge Program which was allocated \$102,000, operates in conjunction with the State University of New York's University Center for Academic and Workforce Development, and provides local social services districts with employment preparation services specifically designed to provide Family Assistance (FA) and other TANF-eligible families with the skills and supports necessary to obtain employment.

Displaced Homemakers: The Displaced Homemakers Program has operated throughout New York State since the 1970s. It provides a continuum of support services for individuals who are primary caretakers in the home and who have experienced a loss of income due to separation, divorce, disability or death of an income-providing family member, or the individual has received federal or State assistance and is no longer eligible for this assistance. This program received \$500,000.

New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP): NYSSHP consolidates the Single Room Occupancy Support Services Program (SRO) and the Supported Housing for Families and Young Adults (SHFYA) into one unified program. NYSSHP is designed to provide support services to eligible residents in order to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency. Eligible populations include single adults, young adults (18-25 years old) and families. Services for all populations are designed to assist residents in maintaining stable housing so that they do not enter or re-enter the homeless services system. \$1.5 million was allocated for NYSSHP.

ACCESS – Welfare to Careers: Metropolitan College's Welfare-to-Careers Consortium Program is collaboration among three major higher educational institutions in New York City (Metropolitan College, Medgar Evers College and Pace University). The Consortium affords participants the opportunity to earn their two-year degree or a baccalaureate degree, thereby greatly increasing their chances of gaining permanent, full-time employment at a sustainable salary level. \$800,000 was allocated for the ACCESS program.

Emergency Homeless Program: The Emergency Homeless Program provides assistance to organizations in local social services districts with a population in excess of two million. This program received \$500,000 to help meet the emergency needs of homeless individuals, families and those at risk of becoming homeless who are eligible for TANF benefits and whose incomes do not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP): STEHP provides assistance for individuals and families to remain in or obtain permanent housing. STEHP supports comprehensive programs that are designed to help maintain and improve the quality of emergency and transitional shelters, and drop-in centers for homeless individuals and families. STEHP provides funding to organizations to meet the costs of operating programs that provide comprehensive supportive services aimed at housing stabilization, rapid re-housing services (obtaining a permanent living situation) and eviction prevention assistance to individuals and families. \$1.5 million was allocated for STEHP.

Disability Advocacy Program: This program provides for the legal representation of individuals whose federal disability benefits have been denied or may be discontinued and received \$250,000 in this year's budget.

FLEXIBLE FUND FOR FAMILY SERVICES (FFFS)

The FFFS encompasses a number of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs administered by local departments of social services which are funded with the Federal TANF Services Block Grant. The SFY 2014-15 allocations for FFFS is \$964 million.

APPENDIX A

2014 SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS
REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL SERVICES

<u>FINAL ACTION</u>	<u>ASSEMBLY BILLS</u>	<u>SENATE BILLS</u>	<u>TOTAL BILLS</u>
BILLS REPORTED WITH OR WITHOUT AMENDMENT			
TO FLOOR; NOT RETURNING TO COMMITTEE (FAVORABLE)	9	0	9
TO WAYS AND MEANS	2	0	2
TO CODES	0	0	0
TO RULES	1	0	1
TO JUDICIARY	0	0	0
TOTAL	12	0	12
BILLS HAVING COMMITTEE REFERENCE CHANGED			
TO <u>Children and Families</u>	1	0	1
TO _____	0	0	0
TO _____	0	0	0
TO _____	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	0	1
SENATE BILLS SUBSTITUTED OR RECALLED			
SUBSTITUTED		0	0
RECALLED		0	0
TOTAL		0	0
BILLS DEFEATED IN COMMITTEE	0	0	0
BILLS HELD FOR CONSIDERATION WITH A ROLL CALL VOTE	14	0	14
BILLS NEVER REPORTED, HELD IN COMMITTEE	64	6	70
BILLS HAVING ENACTING CLAUSES STRICKEN	5	0	5
MOTIONS TO DISCHARGE LOST	0	0	0
TOTAL BILLS IN COMMITTEE	96	6	102
TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD	6		

APPENDIX B

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

A. New York State's role in addressing the influx of migrant youth from Central American Countries

*Tuesday, September 16, 2014 at 11:00am
Room 1923, 19th floor 250 Broadway, New York City*

The Assembly Standing Committee on Social Services, the Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families, and Task Force on New Americans convened a public hearing to examine New York's role in addressing the influx of migrant youth from Central American countries.

Increasing numbers of migrant youth are entering the United States, fleeing from Central America due to the violence and extreme poverty they face there. Many come in search of their parents or other relatives who are residing here either legally or illegally. This year alone, it is expected that 90,000 youth will be detained and face deportation proceedings, which can take up to four years or more. Many are residing either temporarily or permanently in New York State during this time. While immigration and deportation proceedings are federal issues, many youth must go before Family Courts, and some become charges of the state.

B. Fiscal Impact of the 2014-2015 Enacted State Budget on Homeless Services

*Tuesday, December 9, 2014 at 11:00am
Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY*

The Assembly Standing Committee on Social Services and the Assembly Standing Committee on Oversight, Analysis, and Investigation convened a public hearing to examine the impact of the enacted 2014-15 State Budget on homeless programs throughout New York State.

Homelessness continues to be one of the significant crises facing New York State. Over the years, the state has taken steps towards providing assistance to its homeless residents and preventing vulnerable residents from becoming homeless. These services include supportive housing for vulnerable populations, eviction prevention, relocation services, and services to promote housing retention and self-sufficiency.

Witnesses testified to the overwhelming concern about but the lack of funding for these greatly needed programs. It was brought to our attention that a number of long-standing, respected programs in New York City did not receive any STEHP funding during this contract cycle. This will create a huge struggle in New York City to provide the level of prevention services that are greatly needed.

APPENDIX C

2015 COMMITTEE GOALS

It is the Committee's goal to continue to advance legislation in the coming 2015 session that focuses on improving outcomes from the public benefit system in the state of New York. The Committee will look at legislation and initiatives that improve access, quality, and program accountability for recipients of such benefits.

Each year, it becomes more and more difficult for New Yorkers of all income levels to access adequate, safe, and affordable housing. Homelessness has reached an all-time high in New York State. More than 60,000 people are residing in the New York City shelter system; over 25,000 of those are children. The Committee will continue to work to expand access to housing resources for low-income individuals and those in need of supportive housing. The Committee stands firm in its commitment to ensuring that homeless individuals and families find adequate and affordable housing.

The Committee remains strongly committed to addressing the growing issue of the lack of child care dollars for New York State's low-income working families. Funding for child care subsidies is provided through the New York State Child Care Block Grant (NYSCCBG). NYSCCBG has suffered serious cuts in the past few years leaving counties with barely enough funds to fulfill the obligation of child care for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and very little if anything leftover to provide child care subsidies for low-income working families. This issue needs to be addressed in a timely manner to help ensure working families keep their jobs.

Finally, increasing employment opportunities for low-income families and individuals remains a top priority for the Committee. The Committee will be examining existing job programs and looking at the development of new and innovative initiatives to increase employment opportunities. The Committee is also eager to address the dire unemployment rate among minorities, specifically males, that is hindering the progress of our most vulnerable communities. The Committee is energized to take on the most pressing issues for those low-income individuals and families of the state of New York.