



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

A N N U A L

2 0 1 2

R E P O R T



**Committee on
Social Services**

Michele Titus, Chair

SHELDON SILVER, SPEAKER



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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COMMITTEES
Children and Families
Codes
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Local Governments
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SUBCOMMITTEES
Foster Care
Airport and Economic Development

December 15, 2012

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

Dear Speaker Silver:

On behalf of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, I respectfully submit to you the Committee's 2012 Annual Report. This year, the Committee was again successful in securing passage of various measures that will assist low-income individuals and families to achieve greater economic stability. The Committee also restored critical funding during the 2012 fiscal year for programs that provide innovative and efficient opportunities to escape poverty.

The Committee continues to stand committed to advancing legislation that will improve the current welfare system in order to assist the transition of indigent New Yorkers from public assistance to economic independence. The Committee was very pleased to be able to secure funding to provide the final ten percent increase to the cash portion of the public assistance grant. The increase helps thousands of Public Assistance recipients by offering a five percent increase in July 2012 and an additional increase of five percent in October 2012 to achieve full implementation of the final ten percent in this fiscal year. For a typical family of three, the subsidy was increased in July 2012 from \$300 to \$317 per month and in October 2012 the increase brought the public assistance grant up to \$336 per month.

During the 2012 session, the Committee reported several pieces of legislation aimed at improving the lives of people affected by domestic violence, children, the disabled, the working poor and those in receipt of public assistance (PA) or other forms of government funded assistance. Many of the legislative initiatives advanced by the Committee focused on the need to improve the current public assistance system in order to provide recipients with the necessary support to achieve self-sufficiency. These initiatives include expanded educational opportunities, and shifting employment focus to vocational and non-traditional jobs where possible.

The Committee will also continue focusing on legislation that combats homelessness, in addition to ensuring that the record number of children and adults facing homelessness has access to safe and permanent housing. The Assembly advanced A.9867 which would require local social services districts to report on how homelessness is being addressed in each district. The Committee continues to examine how to best utilize federal, state, and local funds to comprehensively address the issue of homelessness. The Committee is closely monitoring activity at the federal level regarding reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant. TANF reauthorization will likely include programmatic changes that may require revisions in New York State's Social Services Law and we look forward to partnering with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that any new funding will be used in an effective and holistic manner.

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 2013 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, flowing style.

Michele Titus
Chair
Committee on Social Services

**2012 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Michele Titus
Chair**

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Committee Staff

Claude Nelson, Committee Clerk

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Simonia Brown, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Jennifer Marrero, Analyst
Jillian Faison, Counsel
Terri Zaleski, Executive Secretary

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Social Services Committee has jurisdiction over legislation affecting programs providing financial, medical 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 closely with the Committees on Health, Children and Families, Aging, Labor and Housing, and with the Task Force on Homelessness, and the Task Force on Food, Farm and Nutrition Policy. The Committee also 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 local Department of Social Services (DSS) or Human Resource Administration (HRA) in New York City provides temporary help to individuals and families with their economic and social services needs to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. The Legislature enacted the Social Services Law to allow the administration of basic temporary assistance and emergency support programs statewide. These programs are 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 one of the 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.
- Chapter 436 of the Laws of 1997 (The Welfare Reform Act (WRA) of 1997) established the Safety Net Assistance (SNA) program to provide assistance to individuals and families who are ineligible for Family Assistance (FA) or other federal temporary assistance programs, including Refugee Cash Assistance. 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(ren) 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- means grants of assistance to aged, blind or disabled individuals and couples who have been determined eligible for or are receiving Federal supplemental security income 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- was 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 flat grant to individuals and couples who are aged, blind and disabled. The flat grant is different for individuals and for couples and also varies according to living arrangement.

Homeless Services

Local districts also have a responsibility to provide services and assistance 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. Eligible homeless persons are those persons who are both homeless and eligible for TA.

Local districts must screen all heads of household and all adult applicants and recipients of TA for alcoholism or substance abuse. The Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) credentialed drug and/or alcohol counselors must assess all adults and head of households identified through the application process to determine whether they are unable to work because of alcohol and/or substance abuse. All individuals who are determined unable to work because of alcohol and/or substance abuse must be referred to mandated treatment.

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.

Food Stamp Program/ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The New York State Food Stamp Program name has been changed to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP 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 which he/she believes will meet his needs 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 – 2012

A. INCOME MAINTENANCE

1. **Public Assistance (PA) Residency Restriction Repealer A.1854 (Wright)**

Social Services law allows 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 higher 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 the California law establishing such a two-tiered benefit provision violated a citizen's constitutional "right to travel." Furthermore, current practice in New York State is not reflective of the provisions of SSL §117(3). An individual, if otherwise eligible, may receive PA and care if such individual is a resident of New York State. As a general principle, 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 reported to the Ways & Means Committee.

2. **Four-Year College as Work Participation A.2471 (Wright)/S.2323 (Montgomery)**

In February 2008, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued final TANF regulations implementing the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. A number of important changes to the regulations support New York's intention to make education and training a major piece of our focus when assisting PA recipients with getting back into the workforce. In particular, HHS made two important changes in the final rules. First, certain amounts of time spent by a recipient in a Baccalaureate or advanced degree program can be counted towards a state's work participation rate. Secondly, for each hour of class time, up to one hour of unsupervised homework time required or advised by an educational program may count towards the work participation rate as well.

Public assistance recipients who are physically and mentally able to work are required to do so or participate in approved programming for 30 hours per week to meet their work participation requirement. This bill would allow attendance in a four-year post-secondary education program to count as work participation for purposes of an individual's public assistance employment requirement in accordance with Federal requirements. Currently,

New York State Regulations allow for time spent doing homework to count towards a person's work requirement. This bill would bring New York State into compliance with the final federal rules.

This bill passed the Assembly but was not acted upon by the Senate.

**3. Health Care Practitioners and Disability Determinations
A.2957 (Wright)/S.1326 (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. As the current law is written, there is limited, if any, 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 but was not acted upon by the Senate.

**4. Automobile Resource Exemptions
A.7236 (Titus)/S.410 (Krueger)**

When an individual or household applies for public assistance, all property and resources must be accounted for in order to determine eligibility. Examples include savings accounts, investment property, housing, land, and 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 at \$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 remove the reference to the lower value, allowing all Public Assistance applicants to retain a vehicle worth \$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 centers, which in turn allows individuals to become more self-sufficient.

This bill was held for consideration in the Ways and Means Committee.

**5. Work Activity Exemption
A.8101 (Titus)/S.5586 (Savino)**

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 modify the work requirements for single-parent head of households receiving PA with a child under the age of one, by exempting the parent from the work requirement for 12 months or until the child reaches their first birthday. This bill would expire on July 31, 2013 with the intent to allow opportunity for reexamination of the

child care subsidy crisis and determination of the need for an extension of this provision. The exemption would protect non-TANF child care subsidies from cuts and allow the working poor to remain in their jobs.

This bill was reported to the Ways and Means Committee.

B. EMPLOYMENT

1. Sustainable Wage Jobs A.3298 (Millman)/S.72 (Montgomery)

This bill would require local social services districts to give strong consideration to educational and training opportunities for sustainable wage jobs and nontraditional employment in their public assistance employment plans for a recipient if such recipient has already obtained their high school diploma or GED.

This bill advanced to the Third Reading Calendar.

C. OTHER LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

1. Awareness of Public Assistance Reimbursement A. 461 (Gibson)/S.6569 (Diaz)

This legislation would require the local social services district to provide applicants for public assistance with oral and written notice that the prospective recipient may be liable for any public assistance ineligibly received. This would require an acknowledgement by signature from the applicant on a form separate from all other public assistance related paperwork, and placed in the applicant's file. This legislation would ensure those prospective PA recipients are fully aware of their commitment to reimburse the state for an overpayment or payment in error.

This bill advanced to the Third Reading Calendar 330.

2. Domestic Violence Shelter Stay A.2651B (Jacobs/S.6308A Ball)

Current law allows victims of domestic violence to receive shelter in a residential program for 90 days with one 45-day extension, if needed. This bill increases the maximum length of stay at a residential program for victims of domestic violence to 180 days by allowing for a second 45-day extension, if needed. The bill aims to provide victims of domestic violence with additional time to find safe, permanent housing.

This bill was signed into law; Chaptered 459.

3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly known as Food Stamp Program) Uniformity of the Finger Imaging Requirement A. 5303A (Wright)

Under State law, all PA recipients are required to be finger imaged, while finger imaging is

not mandatory for people who receive SNAP benefits only. Currently, the Human Resource Administration (HRA) in New York City is one of the few local social services districts authorized to finger image SNAP only recipients. Moreover, New York is one of the four remaining states in the country where finger imaging for SNAP benefits still occurs. In order for needy families in New York City to get SNAP, all adult members or heads of households must be finger imaged. If they don't comply, the entire household is left destitute and without any assistance.

This bill would remove the finger imaging requirement for all low-income families and individuals who apply for or receive SNAP benefits in New York State.

This bill was reported to the Rules Committee.

4. Intimate Partner Violence
A.7348D (Rivera, N.)/S.3079D (Huntley)

This bill would create a temporary commission on intimate partner violence that will study the negative implications of dating violence among young teenagers. The Commission would make recommendations upon their findings and a report would be issued each year for three years.

This bill was reported to the Ways and Means Committee.

5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
A.8005 (Rivera, J./S.5673 Valesky)

This bill amends the name of the food stamp program to reflect the name change of the federal food stamp program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The term food stamps would be changed to SNAP benefits.

This bill was signed into law; Chapter 41.

6. Federal Food Stamp Bonus Award
A.9720 (Titus)/S.452 (Krueger)

This bill would allow the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to retain or restrict the use of five percent of the total amount of any federal food stamp bonuses, and permit OTDA to retain and/or place restrictions on more than five percent of the funds, if it consults with the local social services districts in determining the use of such funds. Further, the bill would change the formula used to distribute the remaining funds so that the amount a local social service district received would be based on the district's contribution toward acquiring the bonus.

This bill was Vetoed, Message #163.

7. Report on Homeless Services throughout the State
A.9867 (Titus)

Homelessness in New York State has reached an all-time high. In New York City alone, more than 50,000 people including 20,000 children, sleep in a New York City shelter as of August 2012. 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.

III. SFY 2012-13 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 2012-13 State budget included approximately \$680 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 2012-13 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 2012-13:

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. Child care subsidies help parent(s)/caretaker(s) to pay some or all of the cost of child care services. A \$392 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.

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, \$1.2 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.

SERVICES AND HEALTH INITIATIVES

Refugee Program: This New York State funded program received \$102,000 to supplement mainstream refugee services during the first 60 months of eligibility to fill in the gaps not covered by other programs, and to extend services beyond the time limits imposed by other programs.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Bridge Program: The Bridge Program which was allocated \$299,000, 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 \$546,000.

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 remaining stably housed 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 a 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. \$149,000 was allocated for the ACCESS program.

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 and 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 2012-13 allocation for FFFS is \$964 million, which is an increase of \$13 million from SFY 2011-12.

APPENDIX A

**2012 SUMMARY OF ACTION ON BILLS REFERRED TO
THE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

| <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 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| To Ways and Means | 8 | 0 | 8 |
| To Codes | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| To Rules | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 13 | 0 | 13 |
| Bills Having Committee Reference Changed | | | |
| To Children and Families Committee | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| To Health Committee | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Senate Bills Substituted or Recalled | | | |
| Substituted | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Recalled | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Bills Never Reported, Held in Committee | 11 | 0 | 11 |
| Bills Never Reported, Died in Committee | 82 | 7 | 89 |
| Bills Having Enacting Clauses Stricken | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| TOTAL BILLS IN COMMITTEE | 111 | 0 | 119 |
| Total Number of Committee Meetings Held | 5 | | |

APPENDIX B

**FINAL ACTION ON BILLS REPORTED BY THE
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

| ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR | SENATE BILL # SPONSOR | FINAL ACTION | DESCRIPTION |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| A.461 Gibson | | Passed the Assembly | Would require the local districts to provide written information to applicants regarding their responsibility to reimburse public assistance in certain instances. |
| A.1854 Wright | | Referred to Ways and Means | Would eliminate the statutory authority that permits local social services districts to require PA recipients to execute a mortgage in favor of the county in the amount of assistance received as a condition of eligibility. |
| A.2471 Wright | S.2323 Montgomery | Passed Assembly | Would allow PA recipients to participate in post-secondary education and to credit that time towards mandated work requirements, in accordance with federal law. |
| A.2651B Jacobs | S.6308A Ball | Chapter 459 | Allows for a second 45-day extension, if needed, in a domestic violence shelter. Currently, the stay is 90 days with one 45-day extension, if needed. |
| A.2957 Wright | S.1326 Dilan | Passed Assembly | Would require that in instances where a certified DSS practitioner is evaluating an applicant, the opinion of the applicant's treating physician be considered in the determination, and that any denial must include a written explanation that presents evidence to support the certified practitioner's differing opinion. |
| A.3298 Millman | S.72 Montgomery | Third Calendar Reading | Would require local social service districts to give strong consideration to educational and training opportunities for sustainable wage jobs and nontraditional employment in their public assistance employment programs, for a person that has already obtained their high school diploma or GED. |
| A.5303A Wright | | Referred to Rules | Would eliminate the finger imaging requirement for applicants or recipients of SNAP who are not also applicants for or recipients of Family Assistance or Safety Net Assistance. |
| A.7236 Titus | S.410 Krueger | Held for Consideration in Ways and Means | Would remove the current two-tier automobile resource limit and authorizes a local district to disregard up to \$9,300 for the value of a car when determining a person's PA eligibility. |
| A.7348D Rivera, N. | S.3079D Huntley | Referred to Ways and Means | Would create a temporary commission on intimate partner violence. |

| ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR | SENATE BILL # SPONSOR | FINAL ACTION | DESCRIPTION |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| A.8005 Rivera, J. | S.5673 Valesky | Chapter 41 | Changes the name of the New York State Food Stamp Program to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). |
| A.8101 Titus | S.5586 Savino | Referred to Ways & Means | Would modify the work requirements for single parent head of households receiving public assistance (PA) with a child under the age of 1. |
| A.9720 Titus | S.452 Krueger | Veto Message 163 | Would require the State to provide 95 percent of federal bonus funds made available through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to localities based on local social services districts' proportional contribution toward acquiring the federal bonus. |
| A.9867 Titus | | Passed Assembly | Would require a detailed report by local social services districts identifying funding sources to reflect the efforts of each district to identify, prevent, and address homelessness. |

APPENDIX C

LAWS ENACTED DURING THE 2012 SESSION

| CHAPTER | ASSEMBLY BILL # SPONSOR | SENATE BILL # SPONSOR | DESCRIPTION |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Chapter 41 | A.8005 Rivera, J. | S.5673 Valesky | Changed the name of the New York State Food Stamp Program to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). |
| Chapter 459 | A.2651B Jacobs | S.6308A Ball | Allows for a second 45-day extension, if needed, in a domestic violence shelter. Currently, the stay is 90 days with one 45-day extension, if needed. |

APPENDIX D

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS AND ROUNDTABLES

A. Fiscal Impact of the 2011-12 Enacted State Budget

Wednesday, January 25, 2012 at 10:30 am

Roosevelt Hearing Room C, Legislative Office Building, Albany

The need for homelessness services for individuals and families is currently at an all-time high in the State as New Yorkers deal with the financial challenges presented by the continuing economic crisis. In the State Fiscal Year 2011-12 Enacted Budget, six homeless services programs were consolidated into two distinct funding streams: the Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP) and the New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP). These funding streams, administered by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), were restructured and consolidated to allow counties greater flexibility in utilizing these funds to address the unique needs of their particular homeless populations.

Witnesses testified that the new consolidated funding streams have been easy to navigate, the application process has been streamlined, and in some cases programs received funds quicker in comparison to previous years. The overwhelming concern was not about consolidation but the lack of funding for these greatly needed programs. It was brought to our attention that New York City did not receive any STEHP funding during this contract cycle. This creates a huge struggle in New York City to provide the level of prevention services that are greatly needed.

B. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at 10:30 am

Roosevelt Hearing Room C, Legislative Office Building, Albany

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federal program created by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act to ameliorate the causes of poverty in communities. The CSBG provides federal anti-poverty funding to a statewide network consisting of Community Action Agencies (CAAs), Community Action Programs (CAPs), and migrant and seasonal farm worker organizations, as designated by federal laws.

The New York State network is comprised of 52 CSBG grantees serving all 62 counties, which provide a range of services to meet the needs of low-income New Yorkers. Funding is also provided to four Indian Tribes/Tribal organizations, for a total of 56 entities.

The CSBG program purposes are to provide assistance to states and local communities working through a network of CAAs and other neighborhood organizations to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities, and empower low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient.

Local services are directed toward goals of achieving self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization based on local assessments to determine need and resources available.

C. Roundtable: An Examination of the Adequacy of Outreach and Social Services for Human Trafficking Victims
Monday, October 16, 2012
New York City

The Social Services Committee, together with the Codes Committee and Oversight, Analysis and Investigation Committee conducted a roundtable on October 16th, 2012 to examine the adequacy of outreach and social services for human trafficking victims, including currently available outreach efforts, social services assistance statewide for human trafficking victims, and to try to identify gaps, roadblocks and possible solutions to any such gap or roadblock.

When New York State enacted its Human Trafficking law in 2007, it recognized that those persons trafficked were victims, not criminals, and should be treated as such which is why the law included provisions to provide services for such victims, estimating that there could be close to 800,000 victims of human trafficking. Since the enactment of the law, data from service providers, law enforcement and other sources have shown that in comparison to the estimated 800,000 victims, relatively few have been provided with victims services. The roundtable consisted of social and legal service providers as well as representatives from state agencies, who collectively discussed ways to better identify and provide services to victims of human trafficking, from initial point of contact, to long-term housing and safety solutions.

The SFY 2012-2013 enacted state budget allocated funds for services for human trafficking victims, which the New York State Assembly supports each year so that trafficking victims can continue to be provided with necessary services.

D. Examination of the Enacted 2012-13 State Budget on Supportive Housing Programs
Monday, December 17, 2012 at 10:30 am
Roosevelt Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany

The Assembly Standing Committee on Social Services and the Assembly Standing Committee on Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities convened a public hearing to examine the impact of the Enacted 2012-13 State Budget on Supportive Housing programs throughout New York State.

Since its inception in the 1980s, Supportive Housing has become one of the most cost-effective methods of combating homelessness amongst high-risk populations in New York State including individuals and families affected by mental illness. By providing secure, stable accommodations and services to individuals and families who may not otherwise have access to permanent affordable living arrangements, Supportive Housing allows residents to receive individualized supports including access to case management, crisis intervention, mental health treatment, job training and placement programs, and support services for families. Permanent housing coupled with these services lends tenants the opportunity to focus on treatment and self-sufficiency while remaining in the community and out of institutional or higher cost settings.

The Committees heard testimony from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and the Office of Mental Health (OMH), as well as providers, advocates, legal representatives, and individuals who have received supports and services through Supportive

Housing programs. Witnesses testified on the success and cost effectiveness of Supportive Housing programs but also included the severe need for affordable housing throughout the state. Testimony also included the recognition of the need to revamp outdated models of service and understaffed housing programs, emphasized “housing first” models of treatment, and suggestions for innovative ideas to close gaps in services for transitional youth and individuals with psychiatric disabilities living with aging parents and guardians.

APPENDIX E

2013 COMMITTEE GOALS

It is the Committee's goal to continue to advance legislation in the coming 2013 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 50,000 people are residing in the New York City shelter system; 20,000 of those people 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.

Increasing employment opportunities for low-income families and individuals remains a top priority for the Committee. The Committee will be examining existing jobs programs and looking at the development of new and innovative initiatives to increase employment opportunities. The Committee is also looking forward to addressing 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.

Finally, the Committee stands firmly 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.