

1 **2022 NYSAC Legislative Conference**
2 **Standing Committee on Economic Development, Environment & Energy**
3 **Resolution #1**

4 **Resolution in Support of Raising the Childcare Subsidy Rate and Increasing**
5 **the Total Allotment to Social Services Districts in Order to Improve**
6 **Equitable Access to Childcare Across New York State**

7 **WHEREAS**, for years, access to high-quality childcare has been limited to those who
8 can afford it or are fortunate enough to receive a subsidy and be able to locate quality
9 care, limiting the ability of parents of young children to enter and succeed in the
10 workforce and for employers to find and retain skilled workers; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the average cost of childcare for an infant in New York State is \$15,394 per
12 year, which is more expensive than in all but five states in the country;¹ and

13 **WHEREAS**, childcare in New York State costs more than college, and infant care is
14 more expensive than the average rent;² and

15 **WHEREAS**, the lack of affordable and accessible childcare during the pandemic has
16 driven women, in particular, out of the workforce in large numbers and led many to
17 weigh whether staying out of the workforce is more cost-efficient; and

18 **WHEREAS**, New York State’s Child Care Availability Task Force, which was co-chaired
19 by then-Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, recognized that childcare is not just a
20 women’s issue but a societal and economic issue that touches every family, in every
21 community, regardless of neighborhood or economic status; and

22 **WHEREAS**, according to a statewide poll conducted in the fall of 2020, the majority of
23 New York State business leaders say the lack of accessibility and availability of high-
24 quality childcare for infants and toddlers negatively impacts their businesses and their
25 ability to hire and retain employees;³ and

26 **WHEREAS**, New York employers specifically cite employee absenteeism and calling-
27 out due to a lack of access to and availability of childcare for infants and toddlers, as well
28 as reduced employee productivity and turnover due to child care issues, as contributing
29 to loss in revenue; and

30 **WHEREAS**, on average, working parents in America miss five to nine days of work per
31 year because of childcare problems, costing U.S. businesses \$3 billion a year in lost
32 productivity;⁴ and

¹ <https://ocfs.ny.gov/reports/childcare/Child-Care-Availability-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

1 **WHEREAS**, Governor Hochul, in one of her first addresses to the business community
2 as Governor, identified childcare as one of her top three priorities to support the
3 economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;⁵ and

4 **WHEREAS**, Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Sheila Poole,
5 in a September 2021 interview, called childcare “the superhighway to economic
6 recovery”;⁶ and

7 **WHEREAS**, the significant difference between the childcare subsidy rate set by OCFS
8 and the actual cost of providing care has contributed to extremely low wages for
9 childcare workers, 98 percent of whom are women and 60 percent of whom are
10 minorities; and

11 **WHEREAS**, low wages have led to a shortage of childcare workers, which has meant
12 that childcare providers cannot keep up with demand and have fewer childcare slots to
13 offer; and

14 **WHEREAS**, 64 percent of New Yorkers live in communities that qualify as child care
15 deserts, meaning the community lacks sufficient child care for the vast majority of
16 families that need it;⁷ and

17 **WHEREAS**, the size of the gap between subsidy rates and the true cost of quality varies
18 by region but exists across the state for infants and toddlers; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the Child Care Availability Task Force’s final report called on New York
20 State to adopt subsidy rates that are aligned with the true cost of quality care, including
21 recognizing the higher cost of care necessary for infants and toddlers; and

22 **WHEREAS**, high-quality childcare promotes healthy child development, which has
23 long-term benefits for children and families, the economy, and society as a whole, as it is
24 proven to reduce rates of incarceration, homelessness, and poverty in later life; and

25 **WHEREAS**, children who have quality early learning experiences are less likely to drop
26 out of high school, need public assistance, or become a teen parent and are more likely
27 to go to college and have good health as an adult; and⁸

28 **WHEREAS**, quality early care and learning also helps reduce the disparities that are
29 often associated with race, ethnicity, language, citizenship status, and socio-economic
30 level; and

31 **WHEREAS**, investing in quality childcare is a critical public investment into
32 a better functioning, more equitable, democratic economy and society.

⁵ <https://www.bizjournals.com/albany/news/2021/09/24/hochul-3-priorities-for-business.html>

⁶ <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/capital-tonight/2021/09/01/ocfs-commissioner--child-care-is--superhighway-to-economic-recovery->

⁷ <https://ocfs.ny.gov/reports/childcare/Child-Care-Availability-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

⁸ Ibid.

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the New York State Association of
2 Counties (NYSAC) supports increasing the subsidy rate in the FY 2023 State Budget so
3 it more closely aligns with the actual cost of care; and

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC supports increasing the total allotment
5 given to social service districts around the state so they can pay the increased subsidy
6 rate without having to decrease the number of children and families receiving the
7 subsidy; and

8 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution be sent to the counties
9 of New York encouraging member counties to enact similar resolutions; and

10 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to
11 Governor Kathy Hochul, OCFS Commissioner Shelia Poole, the New York State
12 Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.