

New York State Citizen Review Panels

*Administered by Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
150 State St., 4th Floor, Albany, NY 12207
Ph: 518-463-1896 ext. 24 Fax: 518-463-3364 dmastin@scaany.org*

July 18, 2008

Terryl Brown Clemons
Acting Counsel to the Governor
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Re: SUPPORT for A9628b/S7293A establishing a forensic fellowship program and A5206b/S5052a allowing direct reimbursement for forensic physical abuse assessments.

Dear Mr. Clemons:

I am writing on behalf of members of the New York Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services in support of two bills which will provide critical medical expertise to the identification of child abuse, both physical and sexual, in New York State.

A9628b/S7293a will establish a forensic fellowship program to train pediatricians in the identification of physical and sexual abuse. Currently, there are few physicians in New York State with this expertise. As medical science has developed, this training has become critical. Evidence of abuse has been missed by doctors who have not had this specialized training. A fellowship program will increase access to this expertise throughout the state.

A5206/S5052 will soon be sent to the Governor's office for consideration. This bill will allow direct reimbursement for forensic physical abuse assessments by the Crime Victim's Board. Many of our rural communities in the state do not have Child Advocacy Centers and therefore do not have access to this expertise. Reimbursements from the Crime Victim's Bureau will allow these communities to extend their protection of children to these cases.

We urge Governor Paterson to sign both A9628b/S7293A and A5206b/S5052a.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Brown, MD, MPH
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics
Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital of New York Presbyterian

Columbia University Medical Center
Director Child Advocacy Center

New York City Citizen Review Panel member

cc: Joe Baker
Assembly Member Amy R. Paulin
Senator Stephen M. Saland

Citizen Review Panels are mandated by federal law. In 1999 the New York Legislature passed S371-b of the Social Services Law establishing panels in New York State to evaluate the extent to which agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities in accordance with the State's Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan, child protection standards set forth in the federal law, and any other criteria that the panel considers important to ensure the protection of children.