

New York State Citizen Review Panels

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December 10, 2007

Ms. Laura Anglin
First Deputy Budget Director
NYS Division of Budget
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224-0341

Dear Ms. Anglin:

We are writing on behalf of the New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services to support the preservation of funding for important preventive services in child welfare. These services are funded at 65% state and 35% local in an open-ended appropriation. The funds are absolutely critical to services for families and children, especially for those who become involved with the child welfare system.

- 1) This funding allows local districts to meet a critical need for services in their communities and will save the state money in the long-term. If cuts were to be made, we would anticipate the number of children entering foster care to increase and the state's recurrence rates to rise.
- 2) This funding supports critical prevention programs such as home visiting which are proven to prevent child abuse and neglect, lead to healthy outcomes for children and promote school readiness.
- 3) This funding will support the implementation of the family assessment track, an important vehicle to prevent further involvement in child protection. This track will allow CPS workers to address more fully the most serious cases of child abuse and neglect and offer important preventive services to those families in need whose situation does not rise to the level of seriousness where a child's safety is of concern.

The New York State Citizen Review Panels ask that you preserve this open-ended funding in the 2008-2009 budget negotiations and that the state/local shares remain 65%/35%.

Sincerely,



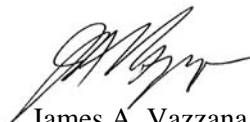
David Lansner
Co-Chair, NYC Panel



Eric Brettschneider
Co-Chair, NYC Panel



Stacy Alvord
Chair, Eastern Panel



James A. Vazzana
Chair, Western Panel

cc: Paul Francis
Dennis Whalen
Kristin Proud
Gladys Carrion

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.