

# *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*

## **MEMORANDUM in SUPPORT**

### **S.4504 (Savino); A.6823 (Paulin)**

New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services support S4504/A6823 which would make permanent New York's differential response legislation. The existing law is due to sunset on June 1, 2011.

This bill makes two changes to the law passed in 2007. It makes Family Assessment (differential or alternative) Response permanent in New York State and removes the exclusion for a city with a population over two million.

The legislation permits any department of social services to offer this alternative to the traditional investigative response to certain reports of child abuse and maltreatment. Since 2007 when the legislation was originally passed, twenty-two counties offer the option and others have expressed interest. The Family Assessment Response (FAR) has been well-received by both families and caseworkers. A recent evaluation of New York's FAR concludes that FAR leads to improved satisfaction, increased linkages to services, reduced need for traditional public child welfare services and fewer petitions to Family Court. In addition, the CAPTA Reform Act of 2010 requires states to offer a differential response option statewide to qualify for CAPTA funding. This legislation meets that requirement.

FAR minimizes the adversarial relationship that results from a child protective investigation for those cases where a child is not in immediate danger. This allows CPS workers to address more fully the most serious cases of child abuse and neglect and offer important services to those families with basic needs such as housing, food, utilities and other necessities.

Reports made to the State Central Register are not all alike and do not require the same response. Differential Response offers local districts a flexible option in their work with families and supports their efforts to engage families in order to prevent future abuse and neglect.

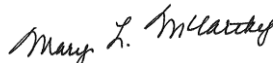
We urge your support of this important legislation.



David Lansner  
Co-Chair  
NYC panel



Elba Montalvo  
Co-Chair  
NYC Panel



Mary McCarthy  
Chair  
Eastern Panel



Ellen Kennedy  
Chair  
Western Panel

May 2, 2011

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.