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## **STATEMENT FROM NEW YORK CAN END CHILD POVERTY COALITION ON THE NEW YORK STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET**

**ALBANY, N.Y. (May 9, 2025)** – “The [New York Can End Child Poverty Coalition](#) applauds Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and members of the New York State Legislature for enacting a FY26 Final Budget that contains significant and intentional steps to reduce child poverty, including:

- Expanding the State’s child tax credit, the Empire State Child Credit, to \$1,000 per child per year for children under 4 and, in the second year, to \$500 per child per year for children 4-17. Additionally, the expansion eliminates an income phase-in requirement that has, until now, excluded the lowest income families from receiving the full credit amount.
- Establishing universal free school meals for all children in schools across New York State that participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- Establishing the Housing Access Voucher Program, with \$50 million to initiate a four-year pilot to distribute housing vouchers to low-income families and individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

These measures will provide crucial economic relief to families experiencing poverty across New York, ensuring more children have the resources they need to thrive while advancing the State’s commitment —established by the [Child Poverty Reduction Act](#)—to cut child poverty in half by 2031. Notably, the expansion of the Child Tax Credit reflects a key recommendation of the [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council \(CPRAC\)](#), the expert body created under the Act to provide evidence-based strategies for achieving this ambitious goal.

The [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council](#) recommendations include a fully inclusive Child Tax Credit that provides \$1,500 per child annually for all children ages 0–18, eliminates the income phase-in, and is indexed to inflation. The council estimates that at this level, the tax credit could reduce child poverty by 23%.

If New York bridges the gap between this year's expansion and the CPRAC recommendation it would ensure the greatest impact by reaching the lowest-income families and delivering consistent, impactful support that helps families meet their basic needs and gives children the opportunity to thrive.

While there is still work to be done, this is a significant step in the right direction and helps solidify New York as a leader in the nationwide fight against child poverty. With this expansion, New York will have one of the most effective state child tax credits in the nation. The expansion of the tax credit alone will impact approximately two million children across the state, and is expected to bring an estimated more than 60,000 children out of poverty, reducing child poverty by 9%. The New York Can End Child Poverty Coalition thanks Governor Hochul and the Legislature for prioritizing New York's children and families and looks forward to continuing to work together to fully implement the CPRAC's evidence-based solutions."

***Background: CPRAC Recommendations Provide a Roadmap for the Path Forward***

On December 18, 2024, the [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council](#) (CPRAC) voted on and passed its [recommendations](#) to help New York State achieve the historic goal of cutting child poverty by 50% by 2031.

CPRAC's recommendations to Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature are built on proven strategies to combat child poverty, including:

- **Expanding the Child Tax Credit** to ensure it is fully refundable, inclusive of all families, and increased to \$1,500 per child.
- **Establishing a statewide rental assistance program** to ensure stable and affordable housing.
- **Increasing public assistance benefits** to meet families' basic needs and indexing them to inflation.
- **Reintroducing state food assistance programs** to fill gaps in federal SNAP coverage for children.

***Background: New York's Commitment to New York's Children***

In 2021/2022, the New York State Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, the [Child Poverty Reduction Act](#), committing the State to reduce child poverty by 50% over 10 years, with attention to racial equity. This bipartisan, nation-leading law created the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council, composed of state leaders, advocates, and community members, to develop evidence-based recommendations and set yearly benchmarks.

The Council also addresses the unequal impact of poverty on racial and ethnic communities, ensuring that solutions promote equity while advancing New York's historic commitment to reducing child poverty.

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**About New York Can End Child Poverty**

*The New York Can End Child Poverty campaign is composed of individuals and organizations from across New York State who are working to improve long-term outcomes for children and families from households experiencing economic hardship. We are dedicated to advancing public policies that support children and families while reducing child poverty and inequity. Learn more at [www.newyorkcan.org](http://www.newyorkcan.org).*