

# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



## NYS AAP

*The NYS AAP is a Coalition of AAP NY Chapters 1, 2 & 3*

### NYS AAP

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May 18, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We join you in fervent hope that the federal government will provide New York and other COVID19 challenged states with much needed resources.

But, as the New York State Government and the New York Medical Community struggle together to treat, contain and overcome the COVID19 virus, we urge you, our state leaders not to cut Medicaid, vital public health programs, education, child care or other supports that New York's children and families need to survive and overcome this pandemic.

Today we are faced with a true choice. Do we cave to the needs of artificial financial austerity? Or do we continue to find ways to fully fund the work we need to do together to overcome the COVID19 pandemic and build a strong and fairer New York?

We urge you to work with those inside and outside of government to find ways to address the needs of the medical community, the education sector and the child childcare providers in this challenging time.

We need everyone working together at the top of their capacity to win this battle. Now is not the time to reduce resources crucial to work that needs to be done to help New Yorkers who are sick recover, and keep New Yorkers who are not yet sick stay well. This is not the time to cut education, which is so vital to the healthy intellectual and social development of all of New York's children. If children are to thrive and parents are to return to work as we push our way through to recovery all families need high quality schools and high quality child care.

We are all more deeply aware of the racial and economic disparities that COVID19 revealed. We cannot ignore the facts. New York needs to address these very obvious disparities now, during our slow but sure recovery.

Cutting programs vital to our children and families will only exacerbate these already unacceptable disparities. Accessible, high quality, culturally competent healthcare, education, child care, housing and nutrition services along with employment and a healthy environment are all required to provide all New York children and families with the supports needed to fight our way back to the new normal.

Medicaid plays a crucial role in providing health care access to low income New Yorkers. As more and more of our state's workers lose their jobs they will also lose their employer base health benefits. Many will fall into income valleys that will make them eligible for Medicaid. Now is not the time to limit anyone's access to vital health care services. Now is not the time to further stress our hospitals and physicians.

We need to give all New York children and families a fighting chance to overcome our current economic and health crisis. We can do this by making sure they have the services and supports they need to meet the new and long-term challenges ahead.

Our state had the highest percentage of income inequity before COVID-19. That inequity is even more pronounced now in the midst of the crisis. It has played out tragically in our minority and low income communities.

In contrast, the wealthiest New Yorkers have done quite well during the ongoing pandemic. Asking the very wealthiest New Yorkers to do their fair share in this emergency situation is simply common sense. Ignoring our state's ability to raise revenue is not a public service. It is denying the reality of public needs.

We urge you to consider:

1. Access the roughly \$20 billion at near-zero interest rates from the Federal Reserve Bank's new Municipal Liquidity Facility
2. Continue to urge our congressional delegation to maximize federal funding in the next stimulus legislation, including the \$1 trillion in aid to state, local, tribal and territorial governments
3. Equalize our tax rates by asking the very wealthiest New Yorkers, whose fortunes have weathered the pandemic well, to do their fair share. It is the right thing to do.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to assure that all New York children and families have what they truly need to weather this crisis. And, we need to work together in fairness and mutual support to rebuild our New York stronger, better and more equitable for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren Seigel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small "MD" in the upper right corner.

Warren Seigel, MD, MBA, FSAM  
Chair, NYS American Academy of Pediatrics

CC: Megan Baldwin  
Paul Francis  
Robert Mujica  
Howard Zucker