



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roxanne J. Persaud

Pre-Natal to Pre-K: Supporting New York's Families

ROXANNE J. PERSAUD February 9, 2016

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Senator Persaud's Audio From Press Conference

Senator Persaud Announces Legislation To Help New York Families During The Critical Early Childhood Period

(Albany, NY) Senator Roxanne J Persaud (D) Senate District 19 today joined members of the Senate Democratic Conference to push for a stronger paid family leave program and unveiled initiatives to help families during the critical early childhood period.

“Maternal Depression does not only affect the mother; it does not only affect the child; it affects the entire family.” Senator Persaud said. “These initiatives will ensure a greater quality of life for New York’s working families and young children while also generating long-term savings for our state.”

The Senate Democratic Conference proposals include a stronger paid family leave program, increased access to childcare, assistance for New York’s working parents and caregivers and support for the growth and development of all New York children. Additionally, the Senate Democrats are calling for increase treatment resources for women facing maternal depression.

The policy initiatives to support New York families include bills that will:

Establish Family Friendly Workplace Practices.

- Implement a 12-week paid family leave program utilizing the existing Temporary Disability Insurance system for implementation, as three other states have already done.
- Support employee requests for flexible schedules and protect employees from retaliation for making such requests.
- Enhance protection for employees for split or cancelled shifts.
- Improve notice provided to employees for schedules and schedule changes.

Increase Access to Childcare Through the “Childcare Advance” and Childcare Subsidies.

- Average annual childcare costs in New York State are \$10,140 to \$14,144 per year for an infant and \$9,776 to \$11,700 for a four-year-old.
- Establish the “Childcare Advance,” a deferral of state taxes to help 134,000 families afford the cost of early childcare and generate over \$80 million in savings and financial returns to the state per year plus economic activity.
- Increase support for childcare subsidies with \$190 million of increased funding to expand the number of eligible families receiving subsidies.

Treat Maternal Depression

- Make available a central, accessible list of providers offering treatment for maternal depression.
- Invest in treatment resources, including referral networks, peer support, and a strengthened and expanded hotline.
- Develop – in coordination with experts – a state best practice protocol for the treatment of maternal depression, including consideration of telemedicine to make treatment options more widely available.

Offer Evidence-Based Maternal Home Visiting Universally to Eligible Families

- Provide universal access for eligible families to evidence-based maternal home visiting programs to serve an additional 27,000 families and generate over \$678 million in long-term savings

Create a New York State Office of Early Childhood

- Create an Office of Early Childhood to ensure the state is using all available early childhood resources to maximize benefits for young children and families.
- The new office would ensure coordination of early childhood programs including oversight of programs and funding streams

Senator Persaud Concluded. “The child bearing process can be a very stressful time for women. The stigma associated with the term depression often discourages mothers and pregnant women from talking about their feelings and symptoms of depression. It is time to require physicians and other healthcare professionals to screen for pregnancy related mental illnesses to help new mothers better care for themselves and their families. This is a common sense way to ensure families receive the mental health services they may require and help remove any lingering stigmas for these new mothers.”

Follow on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/SenatorPersaud>

New York State Senate | Persaud@NySenate.Gov | 718-649-7653