



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Senator Velmanette Montgomery Host Pre-Budget Briefing on the impact of the Family First Act on Kinship Foster Care

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY January 6, 2020

| ISSUE: KINSHIP FAMILIES, KINSHIP CAREGIVERS, FAMILY FIRST ACT, FAMILY REUNIFICATION, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



Prior to the start of this year's Legislative Session, Senator Montgomery in conjunction with the Senate and Assembly Chairs of the Social Services, Children and Families, and Foster Care subcommittee, hosted several child welfare organizations and advocates at a round table forum on Monday, January 6.

The Briefing consisted of Child Welfare representation from across the state and painted an accurate picture of the needs of those on the front lines as it relates to Kinship Foster Care. They raised several issue areas that would tremendously improve the quality of life of subjected youth prior to and after placement. Prominent issues that were raised would include:

- The need to have community re-integration plans in place for youth in kin and non-relative care as well as more preventative services for those aging out.
- The Parental need for an inter-disciplinary team consisting of social workers and Family Court Lawyers.
- All resources to unite youth with Kin should be exhausted before other placement is considered.
- Culturally sensitive approach for Case Workers to avoid creating hostile environments in a home after visiting.
- The need for Parents and Guardians to know their rights when it comes to the child in their care.
- Mediation Services after placement, both non-relative and kin.
- The need for consistent and judgment free respite services for Parents and Guardians.
- Increase state reimbursement rate from 62% to the statutory maximum of 65%.
- Increase funding for subsidies related to aging out youth.
- Family First Act funds directed to helping establish an inter-disciplinary model for Parents or Guardians involved in Family Court.
- The need for services for undocumented youth and families who cannot access the same resources other can.

Here is a list of Organizations that participated in the Briefing:

- Brooklyn Legal Services
- Brooklyn Defender Services
- CASA of New York State
- Center for Family Representation
- Children's Defense Fund
- Children's Aid Society
- The Chronicle of Social Change
- Citizens Committee for Children
- NYU Family Defense Clinic
- Graham Windham
- JCCA
- Jewish Board of Family and Children Services
- Lawyers for Children
- Legal Aid Society
- New Alternatives for Children
- The NY Foundling
- Outreach Development Corporation
- Sheltering Arms Children and Family Services
- Redlich Horwitz Foundation