



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jessica Ramos

## Senator Ramos Embarks on a Statewide Tour to meet with Childcare Providers Ahead of Introducing Universal Childcare Legislation

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JACKSON HEIGHTS, NY — After passing the historic Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act and the first-of-its-kind Excluded Workers Fund, State Senator Jessica Ramos is setting her sights on her next big legislative undertaking: passing Universal Childcare in New York State. The original sponsor of **NYC Under 3** (S6709/A5515), Senator Ramos will use the tour to gather information and feedback from the diverse array of childcare providers across the

state with the intention of re-introducing a statewide universal childcare bill in the 2022 legislative session.

“The COVID-19 pandemic brutally emphasized the need for universal childcare to such a degree that it is now nationally politically popular, whether or not you have kids. I know my progressive colleagues in Washington are fighting for meaningful support for parents in Build Back Better, but having gone through the pandemic as a parent of young children myself, I am personally not willing to leave such a critical policy vulnerable to national politics,” says Senator Jessica Ramos.

“Solidifying universal childcare in our state’s social safety net is a natural progression of the work we did to pass the Child Poverty Reduction Act. As our legislation envisions it, Universal Childcare ensures that at any given moment, there is a safe place for children to be with qualified and expert staff who are paid a dignified wage. But in order to build the infrastructure that is responsive to the reality our parents and childcare workers are facing on the ground, we need to make sure we have the entire, statewide picture. I’m looking forward to meeting with the workers who are doing one of the most important and essential jobs in our economy and speaking with them at greater length about how we can support them from Albany.”

The tour will span all ten major regions of NY State, visiting childcare centers that range from in-home neighborhood care, Headstart programs, and afterschool programs for elementary-aged children. Throughout the course of her tour, Senator Ramos will be joined by her Senate and Assembly colleagues - including Assembly Member Sarah Clark (D - AD 136), who will be co-sponsoring the legislation in the State Assembly.

“Our childcare ecosystem has been hanging on by a thread for years, and the last 18 months have only exacerbated the crisis. Countless women and men have left the workforce due to

unmet childcare needs, our childcare providers are struggling to stay afloat and attract or properly pay the needed staff to provide care. I am proud to join fellow working mom and legislator Senator Ramos on new, bold legislation that will transform our current model to achieve truly universal childcare. As we begin to lay out a new vision of care, we look forward to hearing directly from families, childcare workers, advocates, and providers throughout the state, gathering ideas and incorporating their important feedback,” says Assembly Member Sarah Clark.

“Among many solutions, we know that to be successful, there are three critical directives we must address: First to pay providers at the true cost of care. Second, invest in the childcare workforce with both a living wage, increased training, and professional development. Lastly, we must ensure that quality, affordable care is available to every New York family that needs it, when they need it, regardless of zip code. Regrettably, it took a pandemic to make clear what our families and providers have known for years: childcare is infrastructure, and there has never been a better time than right now to make a bold investment that will benefit New Yorkers for years to come.”

The second leg of Senator Ramos and AM Clark’s statewide childcare tour will be this Friday, 11/12. Please contact Astrid Aune at [aaune@nysenate.gov](mailto:aaune@nysenate.gov) for more information.

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