

## Memorandum in Support

### S. 2091 (Montgomery)/A. 3657 (Scarborough)

*Winning Beginning NY*, the state's early care and learning coalition, strongly supports S. 2091/A. 3657, which would reduce barriers to accessing child care for low-income families.

S. 2091/A. 3657 would amend the Social Services Law so that, while applicants for or recipients of child care assistance would be encouraged to obtain a child support order, no applicant or recipient would be required to pursue a court order for child support as a condition of eligibility for child care assistance.

*Winning Beginning NY* agrees with this stance. While custodial parents should be encouraged to seek support orders from non-contributing parents, there are important reasons why vulnerable, low-income families do not seek such support. Sometimes a fragile relationship exists with the non-custodial parent that will quickly be severed when a court order is sought. In other instances, not seeking a court order has been important for the safety of the custodial parent, as in cases where domestic violence has occurred.

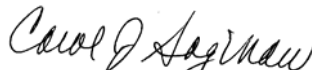
This non-statutory requirement has already begun to have a devastating impact on low-income women and their children, as well as on the child care system as a whole. Child care resource and referral (CCR&R) network members across the state report that child care providers are witnessing families leaving subsidized regulated care to seek alternative venues of care for their children. CCR&R network members further state that a significant number of child care programs have closed as a result of the loss of children to the regulated system, a by-product that negatively impacts the early care and education system as a whole.

This legislation is an important step toward helping some low-income families afford child care, which will allow them to work while providing their children with early learning opportunities in safe settings. Thank you for helping to amend the current requirement.

Sincerely,



Karen Schimke  
President and CEO  
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy



Carol J. Saginaw  
Executive Director  
NYS Child Care Coordinating Council



Kristen Kerr  
Executive Director  
NYS Association for the Education  
of Young Children



Nancy Kolben  
Executive Director  
Child Care, Inc.

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For further information, please contact me at 518/463-1896, ext. 25.