



KEN BLANKENBUSH
Assemblyman 117th District

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September 8, 2023

Suzanne Miles-Gustave, Esq.
Acting Commissioner, Office of Children and Family Services
Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Dear Commissioner Miles-Gustave,

We are writing to bring your attention to an emerging issue that child care providers are facing in our communities. As you are likely aware, the supply of child care in our state is detrimentally scarce. Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic many of our communities were, unfortunately, already within child care deserts. The pandemic has only exacerbated this situation, having caused untold damage and exposing an alarming crisis in child care.

In response, New York and its federal partners have initiated several efforts to address child care deserts, yielding some success. However, the Child Care Desert Grant program, in particular, presents more barriers for prospective child care providers. As mentioned in the attached North County Public Radio [article](#) the Child Care Deserts Grant program has established unrealistic timelines and financially penalizes new providers for not meeting such unrealistic expectations.

While we applaud the intent of the program, we find that the program requirements are overly burdensome in an already troubled industry and that they are unfair for new providers. As the article highlights, new providers who receive this grant assistance are expected to open within 120 days, yet the average time for a provider to open is six months at the earliest. If a provider is unable to meet this 120-day deadline, they are forced to forfeit the entire grant award. Additionally, if a child care provider is unable to receive their license within the first 60 days, the provider must forfeit the first payment of their award. We find these and the other aforementioned expectations to be punitive and unrealistic.

We hope that this article will raise the same concerns for you as it has for us. We also hope that you and your staff will pursue any solutions that will address our concerns, such as expanding the established 120-day deadline, removing the possible forfeiture of awards if a grantee's project is delayed, and easing any associated fines.

Thank you for your time, and, as always, we look forward to working with you and your staff on addressing the many child care issues our state faces.

Links: Child Care Deserts (www.childcaresdeserts.com)

NPR: (www.northcountrypublicradio.com)

Very Truly Yours,



Ken Blankenbush
117th Assembly District



Joseph Angelino
121st Assembly District



Anil Beephan
105th Assembly District



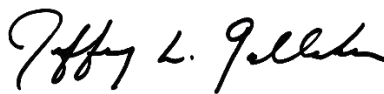
Scott Bendett
107th Assembly District



Joseph P. DeStefano
3rd Assembly District



David J. DiPietro
147th Assembly District



Jeffery Gallahan
131st Assembly District



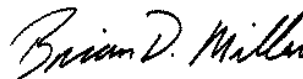
Stephen M. Hawley
139th Assembly District



John Lemondes, Jr.
126th Assembly District



Brian D. Manktelow
130th Assembly District



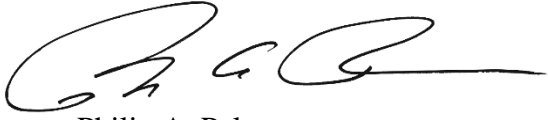
Brian D. Miller
122nd Assembly District



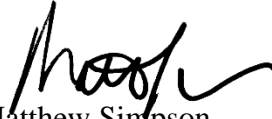
Michael J. Norris
144th Assembly District



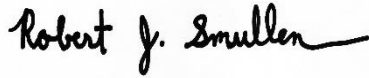
Michael Novakhov
45th Assembly District



Philip A. Palmesano
132nd Assembly District



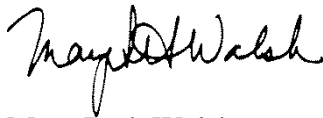
Matthew Simpson
114th Assembly District



Robert J. Smullen
118th Assembly District



Christopher Tague
102nd Assembly District



Mary Beth Walsh
112th Assembly District

cc: Andrew Hevesi, Chairman
Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families