



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

October 21, 2015

Andrew M Cuomo  
Governor  
New York State  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, New York 12224

**RE: A.6575 - Provides for a deduction from personal gross income for expenses incurred in the adoption of a child in the foster care system.**

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write to you with urgency on an important piece of child-protection legislation now before you. This past summer, a group led by New York City Public Advocate Letitia James filed a class action lawsuit against New York State and New York City with evidence that children in our foster care system are suffering irreparable harm due to delays in finding them a permanent home. Earlier this week the State agreed to a series of reforms dictated by a federal judge to reform a system many have called dysfunctional.

We have long recognized the problems associated with our foster care system and noticed the long delays in finding these mostly black and Latino children a permanent home. The slow and low adoption rates of these children prompted us to introduce, support and work on the legislation you must now decide to sign or veto once again.

We stand ready to work with you on any modifications to this legislation which can be accomplished via a chapter amendment but urge you strongly not to veto this legislation again. It would be inconsistent with the facts as pointed out by a federal court and with your statements to the media on this issue as, "this case is about compassion and the true nature of human justice."

This legislation creates one more tool to help improve the chances that children in our foster care system will be adopted by helping interested families afford the related expenses. The lawsuit New York State just settled on this issue correctly asserted that it takes longer for children in the City of New York to be adopted than in the rest of the nation. It is also correct in charging that life-long mental health harm has been caused by the current delays in finding these children a permanent home, including adoption.

At a time when New York State has been granting tax credits to a host of industries and for the purchase of luxury water vehicles, it would be bad public policy not to engage the fiscal tools at our disposal to improve the lives of thousands of children waiting for a permanent home all across our State.

On behalf of foster care children waiting for a home, we implore you to sign this bill. We stand ready to work with you on any concerns and modifications through a chapter amendment if needed. We look forward to your response and to our continued work to improve the lives of all New Yorkers. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marcos A. Crespo  
Member of Assembly  
Chair, Assembly Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

N. Nick Perry  
Member of Assembly  
Chair, Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus