



THE COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL WILL HURT MANY ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

New York City – The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF) considers Governor David Paterson's 2009 Executive budget proposal inadequate in protecting vulnerable communities, including Asian Pacific American children and families, during these tough economic times. His proposal has the correct intention of addressing core services but does not help families get the resources to thrive in this environment.

In New York City, Asian Pacific Americans are by percentage the fastest growing group, making up 12% of the population. The Asian Pacific American community has real and unique needs, with the second highest rate of poverty (25.9%) and the highest rate of linguistic isolation (28%) among all racial groups. Nearly 25% of Asian Pacific Americans age 25 years and older do not have a high school degree. Thus, the proposed cuts to core services – which aim to expand educational opportunities, increase access to health care, and keep children and families together – will have a direct and disproportionate impact on Asian Pacific Americans.

"The Governor's budget proposal calls for shared sacrifice. However, his plans will cut health care, child welfare, and education services that will unfairly harm Asian Pacific American and immigrant children and families," said **Wayne Ho, Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families.**

Education: The Governor proposes to cut \$2.5 billion and will not provide new dollars for Contracts for Excellence funding as promised, which will reverse efforts to improve the education of English Language Learners (ELLs). As 20% of Asian Pacific American students are ELLs, the lack of resources to improve their education will make it harder for them to advance and graduate from school prepared for work and college.

Health Care: The Governor makes positive strides in minimizing barriers to accessing health care services and the expansion of health insurance through his support of Family Health Plus. However, the proposal also causes financial barriers for families by increasing the family contribution to Child Health Plus and instituting fees for parents as part of early intervention programs. With 20% of Asian Pacific Americans without health insurance, these financial barriers will make it even harder for Asian Pacific American families to stay healthy.

Child Welfare: CACF applauds the Governor's commitment to extending the child welfare financing law for the next three years, but CACF is disappointed that this funding will be made at the expense of eliminating preventive services. Preventive services are vital for ensuring that Asian Pacific American children are not separated from their parents. While families in the child welfare system have decreased by 50% in the past decade, the percentage of Asian Pacific American families in the system has increased. The Governor needs to support preventive services, which will help keep Asian Pacific American families together and children safe.

CACF urges the Governor to consider not only cuts to services but also revenue-generating options that are progressive, equitable, and fair. CACF calls on the Governor to protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers during these challenging economic times.

The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF), the nation's only pan-Asian children's advocacy organization, aims to improve the well-being of Asian Pacific American children and families in New York City. CACF advocates for better policies, funding, and services to ensure that children of all backgrounds grow up healthy and safe.

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