



2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ACCESS TO JUSTICE



Award of Attorneys' Fees (A.2475/S.4129): Justice must not be something only accessible by the wealthy. This critical measure will increase access to civil legal services related to discrimination under the Human Rights Law (HRL), without requiring an investment of State funding, by allowing the granting of attorneys' fees to prevailing plaintiffs. **ASK: Pass the Award of Attorney's Fees bill.**



Liberty Defense Project (LDP): New York's diverse culture, vibrant communities, and economy thrive thanks to immigrant families. The Liberty Defense Program helps immigrant New Yorkers navigate the complex systems of naturalization, permanent residency, employment authorization as well as representation through deportation screenings and other cases important for keeping friends, coworkers, communities, and families together. **ASK: Continue level funding of \$10 million for the Liberty Defense Program.**



Disability Advocacy Program (DAP): For three decades DAP has provided legal assistance to low income disabled New Yorkers seeking Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD). DAP serves approximately 4,000 New Yorkers each year and has returned over \$1.1 billion to the state and local counties since its inception in 1983, making it one of New York's most long-lasting and respected legal programs. **ASK: Continue level funding of \$8.26 million for DAP.**



Office of Court Administration/Legal Services Assistance Fund: Civil Legal Services help low income people protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families. Office of Court Administration's proposed budget for civil legal services and the Legal Service Assistance Fund from the legislature are both essential to equal access to justice. **ASK: Continue level funding for civil legal services in the OCA budget (\$100 million); maintain Legislative Funding for civil legal services in LSAF (\$2.4million).**

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Gender Recognition Act (A.3457/S.0056): Access to accurate identity documents is a necessity in many areas of life, whether that is employment, education, housing, medical care, or travel. This comprehensive bill will create streamlined and privacy-protective processes for transgender and nonbinary New Yorkers to update and obtain accurate identification documents. **ASK: Pass the Gender Recognition Act.**



Equal Access to Quality Child Care (A.3110/S.1546): At an annual cost of \$15,394, quality child care is unaffordable for 90% of New York families. This measure would make child care payments affordable by capping parental co-payments at 20% of household income that exceeds the poverty level. **ASK: Pass Equal Access to Quality Childcare legislation.**



Community Health Advocates (CHA): CHA helps New Yorkers navigate today's complex health care system by providing individual assistance, outreach, and education to communities throughout New York State. Since 2010 CHA has helped 337,000 New Yorkers – individuals, families, and small businesses. **ASK: Increase funding to \$5 million for CHA.**

ECONOMIC JUSTICE



Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP): HOPP provides counseling and legal services to distressed homeowners. Since 2012, HOPP grantees have served an average of 15,833 families per year. Every \$1 million invested in HOPP yields a return of over \$5 million in tax and property cost savings alone. **ASK: Continue level funding of \$20 million for HOPP.**



Enhanced Financial Disclosures from For-profit Schools: 4% of college students in New York State attend a for-profit college, but over 40% of New Yorkers in default on their loans attended a for-profit school. New York needs much stronger protections against the abusive practices that harm our students and service members attending these programs. **ASK: Pass Enhanced Financial Disclosures from For-Profit Schools legislation.**



Securing Wages Earned Against Theft (A.9008/S.7256) (SWEAT): \$1 billion of wage theft happens every year in New York State, and recent measures meant to address the problem do not address the biggest hurdle to collecting unpaid wages – namely, how easy it is for both employers and shareholders to transfer and hide assets while a lawsuit or investigation by the Department of Labor (DOL) is taking place. SWEAT is the only legislation that addresses this costly problem. **ASK: Pass Securing Wages Earned Against Theft (SWEAT).**