

The New York State Self-Sufficiency Standard 2010 Steering Committee

Working together to help families and individuals achieve economic security and work to provide opportunities for all.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOOK AT COSTS OF LIVING REVEALS FINANCIAL REALITIES FACING NEW YORK FAMILIES

New Report on Family Incomes Demonstrates Need for Policies Promoting Economic Stability

Buffalo, NY— In order for a single mother in Buffalo with one pre-schooler and one school-age child to meet her most basic expenses, she needs an income of at least \$22.43 an hour—or \$47,362 annually—according to a study released today. *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York State* details how much it costs for families to meet their basic needs—without any public or private supports—across the state of New York.

The report, which was prepared by Dr. Diana Pearce of the University of Washington, will be issued at a series of briefings across the state:

Albany – LCA Press Room at the Legislative Office Building, Tuesday, June 29, 2010 at 10:30am

Buffalo – WNED TV Studio, Tuesday, June 29, 2010 at 10:30am

New York City – New York Women's Foundation, Tuesday, June 29, 2010 at 10:00 am

Rochester – Rubin Center for Education at the Telesca Center for Justice, Wednesday, June 30 at 10:30am

"This Self-Sufficiency Standard demonstrates why federal and state policies need to fill the gaps for working families here in New York," said Susan Antos, Senior Staff Attorney with the Public Benefits & Health Unit of the Empire Justice Center. "We want to send a strong message to decision-makers in the public sector, the education and business sectors and to our community-based organizations that we now know what it takes for families to make ends meet in every county in New York State.

Frank Mauro, Executive Director of the Fiscal Policy Institute, emphasizes "By presenting an accurate and updated picture of the costs of living and working across New York State for families of various sizes, the Self Sufficiency Standard provides policymakers at the federal, state and local levels with an invaluable tool. The data presented in the new report, and in the accompanying detailed tables for each county in the state, underscores the importance of public structures such as child care assistance in helping low and moderate wage working families to make ends meet."

"We can and must be innovative in our approach to defining and funding programs and policies that offer these families a real shot at financial stability. Nutrition assistance, tax credits, job training and placement assistance are among those public sector programs in place not fully utilized by all families who need them or not fully funded. Working together, we can make a difference by ensuring that families have access to all the components necessary for moving along a path toward economic stability and ultimately economic security," stated Denise Harlow, CEO of the NYS Community Action Association.

Joining in the release of the report, Donna Addikson, Family Economic Security Program Director for Wider Opportunities for Women, said, "New York State is not alone. You are joining states around the country in calling critical attention to the financial needs of families and the costs to live and work in their own communities. The Self-Sufficiency Standard is one of the cornerstones of Wider Opportunities for Women's national project, The Family Economic Security Project.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York State charts the actual costs of living and working in the state. It measures how much income a family needs to pay for housing, food, childcare, healthcare, transportation and taxes—if they do not receive any help from relatives, friends or the government—based on the ages, as well as number, of children in each household, and where the family lives.

For more information or to download a copy of the report, go to www.nyscommunityaction.org or www.fiscalpolicy.org.

