



Empire Justice Center

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Memorandum of Support

Child Care Subsidies for Parents who Work the Night Shift

A.413A (Jaffee)/S.3420 (Savino)

Susan W., a resident of Wyoming County, became the caregiver for her 2 year old grandson after her daughter received a head injury in Iraq. Susan worked the night shift in a box factory and needed child care to sleep when she returned from work. Because Wyoming County does not provide care for those who need child care to sleep, and Susan could not afford child care without a subsidy, Susan's health dramatically suffered as she struggled to stay awake during the day to care for her grandchild.

Parents who work nights often need child care so that they can sleep during the day if their children are young and not in school. Regulations currently permit, but do not require, social services districts to provide a child care subsidy to financially eligible parents and caretakers who work second or third shifts and need child care for their young children in order to sleep.¹ Forty-seven out of fifty-eight social services districts do exercise this option and provide subsidized daytime child care for parents who need to sleep. For those living in the 10 social services districts that do not provide this option, life can be very difficult, as sleep deprived parents and caregivers juggle their need to sleep with caring for a young child.²

Even among the districts that provide this benefit, the local rules vary among districts. The majority of the districts, 32 in total, will fund up to 8 hours of subsidized child care for a parent who works second or third shift and needs to sleep during the day. Three districts, Steuben, Suffolk and Sullivan, provide sleep care for less than six hours a night. An additional 10 districts pay for six hours of sleep care.³ Westchester and Chautauqua Counties provide a child care subsidy for seven hours of sleep care. This bill would require all districts to authorize up to 8 hours of care when such care is necessary for a working parent with a small child to sleep.

This bill, which passed the Senate on May 30, 2019, will assure that low income parents with young children who work the night shift and need child care to get adequate sleep will be able to do so regardless of where they live.

Empire Justice Center strongly supports passage of this bill.

This memorandum was prepared by:

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¹ 18 NYCRR § 415.4(c)(3).

² The social services districts that do not authorize care for parents who work the night shift and who need care so that they can sleep during the day because they have young children are Chenango, Clinton, Erie, Genesee, Hamilton, Nassau, New York City, Niagara, Saratoga and Wyoming.

³ These districts are Columbia, Fulton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Monroe, Seneca, St. Lawrence, Tioga, Ulster and Warren.