



Submitted Testimony of
Jacqueline A. Negri, Executive Director
Association of New York State Youth Bureaus
Before
New York State Senate Committee on Social Services
March 11, 2013, NYS Legislative Office Building
Malcolm A. Smith, Chair, Senate Committee on Social Services



Testimony before the NYS Senate Committee on Social Services

Chairman Smith, and other distinguished members of the Committee, on behalf of the network of youth bureaus that guide and provide a wide array of youth development and prevention services, the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (ANYSYBs) offers recommendations regarding the future of Youth Development Delinquency Program (YDDP) and the impact the proposed minimum wage increase will have on the Summer Youth Employment Program. I am Jackie Negri, Executive Director of the Association.

Currently, the association represents youth bureaus, sponsored by counties, cities, towns, and villages statewide. This network of youth bureaus is critical to the youth development system and has survived repeated funding cuts to provide quality youth development, prevention and interventions services. More than 1.5 million youth statewide benefit from the services and program of the youth bureau network and our goal is sustain those services and programs despite proposals that may weaken the youth development infrastructure.

The end product of a strong youth development system is to offer skills that build our state's citizenry, including: supporting timely High school graduation, providing career and job readiness training, teaching civic responsibility and diverting juvenile violators from entering or re-entering the delinquency system. To achieve these goals, a youth bureau system must be maintained to continue to provide direct services and also fund an array of community-based, non-profit agencies. Funding supports the following programs and services and is not limited to:

- Afterschool prevention programs

- Out-of-school job readiness and summer jobs
- Healthy eating and obesity prevention
- Mentoring programs
- Programs to prevent youth involvement in gangs and substance use; and
- Supports for teen pregnancy & prevention

ANYSYB RECOMMENDATIONS

Restore \$1.28 million to YDDP to maintain 2012-13 levels.

As you are aware the YDDP funding streams (as well as SDPP) have been cut every year since 2008, declining from almost \$39 million to \$14.1 million in the 2012-13 state fiscal year. This year, because of the timing of allocations, even if the funding streams are combined into a Youth Development Program as proposed in the *Executive Budget*, an addition of \$1.25 million is needed to truly maintain the funding for the two programs at last year's levels.

Make Amendments to the Governor's Youth Development Program Proposal

In addition to the Association's request for a funding restoration, we urge the legislature to negotiate amendments to the Governor's proposal, intended to streamline state administration of the Youth Bureau system, but which could eliminate the presence of youth bureaus that maintain the vital youth development services in your communities despite drastic funding cuts. The Association proposes that you consider the following amendments:

- **The proposed new Youth Development Program funding (formerly YDDP/SDPP funding) flow through County Youth Bureaus and the NY City Department of Youth and Community Development as single points of contact;**

- **Authorize a role for youth bureaus, county and municipal, in the development of regulations for the distribution formula and outcome measurement requirements, in conjunction with OCFS;**
- **Authorize that the proposed Comprehensive Plan include addressing the needs of all current cities, towns and villages with municipal youth bureaus;**
- **Authorize the January 1 2014 start date, however include a mechanism for municipal youth bureaus to continue to receive funding until January 1 2015 for sufficient time to develop outcome measures; and**
- **Assure that the RHYA program is unaffected by the consolidation language and any distribution formula changes.**

We believe these amendments will protect youth access to widespread youth development programs that meet outcome measures. **We seek to maintain the Youth Bureau presence in guiding and distributing whatever funding is available in the community.**

Summer Youth Employment Program

State support for both YDDP and SYEP has decreased substantially over the past 6 years. The ability to reach youth has therefore been compromised. Now, both the Governor and the Assembly have acted to increase the minimum wage. That increase will decrease the number of kids who can be employed this summer. Last summer, approximately 50,000 youth were supported by the \$25 million for SYEP. If the minimum wage goes into effect prior to September 1, 2013, approximately 7,500 fewer young adults can participate in the essential youth development experience that a summer job offers.

In relation to the impact the minimum wage increase may have on YDDP programs, state funding has declined by nearly 65% since 2008. Many of the part-time youth development programs funded by YDDP use minimum wage, temporary employees. The ability to staff summer camps, after-school tutoring centers and other community diversion and mentoring programs will be affected by the minimum wage increase.

We urge you to carefully consider increasing state funding to both YDDP and SYEP to minimize the unintended negative impact. Additionally, we urge you to carefully consider the implementation date of the minimum wage increase to minimize some immediate negative impact.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations. Your assistance and commitment to youth development and youth bureaus has allowed for a strong, viable system that is available to all youth, statewide. If further information is needed, please contact me directly at jackie@nycap.rr.com or 518-526-8518.

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