



Chinese-American Planning Council State Policy and Advocacy Agenda FY 2018-19

Founded in 1965, the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC) has the mission to promote social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant and low-income communities. We advance our communities through more than 50 programs, including early childhood education, school-age care, youth services, workforce development, community services, and senior services, serving over 60,000 community members across New York City each year. We transform our communities through social services and social change. In order to build transformative change, we have created a policy agenda that addresses persistent needs and emerging trends in our communities.

Economic Empowerment

Strong Nonprofits for a Better New York

CPC is a member of the Strong Nonprofits campaign, a statewide coalition of more than 350 nonprofit human services providers calling for systemic changes and key investments in the nonprofit workforce and infrastructure. Working under contract with the State, human services agencies provide crucial services to uplift New Yorkers, and the State must ensure they can continue their vital work through:

- 1. Investing \$65 million** (per year for two years) to provide salary increases for direct service workers who were not covered by the FY18 increases for direct care workers, at an equivalent of 3.25% per year for two years
- 2. Investing \$23 million** to fund the minimum wage increase for State contracts not yet adjusted to reflect the increased wages, leaving nonprofits to fill the gap of yet another unfunded mandate
- 3. Investing \$100 million** to continue the Nonprofit Infrastructure Capital Investment Program (NICIP), which is critical for nonprofits to address necessary building repairs, technology upgrades, and other capital needs not supported by current contracts

Settlement House Program

The Settlement House Program is a State-level funding stream that provides flexible funding support for settlement houses across New York State. CPC supports the restoration of and an increase in the Settlement House Program from \$2.45 million to **\$5 million**

Early Childhood Education

While early childhood education has been proven critical to lifelong economic and social success, only 17% of eligible families are served in New York State. New York State can invest in making sure all children have this critical support by:

1. **Creating a new fund which allows localities that use 100% of their State child care allocation** without meeting the needs of all income-eligible families to access funds to serve more families
2. **Allowing Economic Development Funds to be used** to support child care programs
3. **Continuing expansion of the Child Care Tax Credit**

Child Welfare

We urge the State to reverse course on proposed budget cuts that threaten to weaken programs proven to strengthen families and put the well-being of the most vulnerable children at risk, particularly in New York City. This includes:

1. **Rescinding the proposal to cap the state share** of child welfare services (protective, preventive, independent living and adoption administration) for New York City (\$129 million)
2. **Rescinding the proposal to eliminate all state funding for Close to Home** (\$41 million)
3. Ensuring all counties, including New York City, **have resources needed to implement Raise the Age**

Adult Literacy

For many of our immigrant community members, the first step towards economic empowerment is literacy and language access. To ensure that all community members have the literacy skills and resources to participate and contribute to our economy, we urge the State to invest:

1. **\$8 million increase** in adult literacy funding in Adult Literacy Education (ALE) in order to counteract the planned replacement of the English Language Civics program with new programming designed to serve higher-skilled individuals as a result of changes in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
2. **\$10 million investment** in family literacy programs, which allow family members across generations to build literacy skills concurrently

Senior Affordable Housing Services

The interconnection between services for older adults can mean the difference between successful aging in place versus forced hospitalization or being moved to a nursing facility. We urge the State to **invest \$10 million** to provide service coordination in senior affordable housing to help older adults to age successfully in place

Housing Stability Support

HSS is a statewide rental supplement for public assistance-eligible families and individuals facing eviction, currently homeless, or facing loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions. By investing **\$40 million** in this critical support, HSS will keep hundreds of thousands of at risk people in their homes, alleviating the financial burden of shelters and other stopgap measures, as well as mitigating the extensive social costs of homelessness

24 Hour Pay for Home Health Aides

Home health aides are critical human services workers who ensure that older adults and people with disabilities are able to remain in their homes with adequate care. The NYS Department of Labor and NYS Appellate Court have been at odds about whether these workers should be paid for 13 hours with breaks or the full 24 hours. Currently they are paid at 13 hours with uninterrupted breaks. **If there are changes to the current system, CPC urges the State to fund the mandate so that home care agencies can continue providing these critical services.**

Social Empowerment

New York Health Act

Uneven access to health care is a key issue in our communities, where one in five Asian Americans is uninsured, and many more are underinsured. **CPC supports the passing of the New York Health Act (A4738/S4840)**, which would establish a universal, publically financed single pay health plan to provide comprehensive health coverage for all New Yorkers. This legislation will extend health insurance to all New York State residents regardless of employment, immigration status, financial status, age, disability, pre-existing condition, and create a truly affordable and equitable health care system for all.

New York DREAM Act

For undocumented community members, access to affordable higher education is a significant barrier to upward mobility and ability to continue contributing to the community. The DREAM Act will help ease the cost of higher education for children of immigrants in New York by eliminating obstacles to obtaining state financial aid for undocumented students. Under the proposal, those students would be eligible for general awards, performance-based awards, or the state's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) funds. **We urge the New York State legislature to pass the DREAM Act.**

Civic Engagement and Voter Rights Reform

New York State's antiquated voter policies lead to low turnout across the State, and disproportionately bar low-income, people of color and immigrants from political power. By reforming election laws and modernizing voting systems, New York State can make voting access more equitable through the following systems:

- 1. Early voting access:** allowing registered New Yorkers to vote in person in the days leading up to Election Day, providing voters with tight work schedules or no voting leave to participate
- 2. Automatic voter registration:** automatically registering all eligible voters through an electronic process, which would be made available through multiple State agencies, including the DMV and through applying for public benefits
- 3. Same-day voter registration:** allowing New Yorkers to register and vote on the same day so that registration deadlines do not prevent New Yorkers from having the opportunity to participate in the electoral process

4. **Absentee voting access for older adults:** allowing older adults to enlist in no-excuse absentee voting without going through hoops to qualify
5. **Flexibility to change party affiliation:** removing the 193 day deadline to switch party affiliation before the primary
6. **Restoring parolee voting rights:** allowing New Yorkers on parole to continue voting, without having to re-register with the Board of Elections

Infrastructure Improvement Projects

Capital Funding

CPC's Queens Community Center, which currently serves approximately 20,000 community members from multiple neighborhoods and boroughs, has experienced higher demand than we have physical space. **We are seeking \$750,000 in capital grants in order to renovate the top three floors of the Queens Community Center,** which would then be used for additional youth programming, workforce and literacy programming, and other community services.