

STATE OF NEW YORK

6567

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 19, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. NIOU -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to establish the Marshall plan for moms task force; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings. The Legislature finds that any relief
2 and long-term recovery from the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandem-
3 ic must recognize the disproportionate burden mothers have weathered.
4 Women, especially mothers, have faced the brunt of the economic chal-
5 lenges of the pandemic due to social barriers and policy failures that
6 have been compounded by enduring racism and gender injustices, including
7 the lack of care infrastructure, lack of family-supportive workplaces,
8 and gender and racial pay inequities.

9 Women continue to face unjust gender and racial wage gaps, and are
10 overrepresented in low-wage jobs, despite their gains in workforce
11 participation. Asian-American and Pacific Islander women, particularly
12 Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander women, get paid as little as \$.50
13 for every dollar a White man makes. Black women make only \$0.63 for
14 every dollar a White man makes, and as a result may lose \$946,000 in
15 their lifetimes. Latina women earn \$0.55 for every dollar earned by a
16 White man, and as a result may lose over \$1,100,000 in wages over the
17 course of a 40-year career. Native American women are paid \$0.60 for
18 every dollar a White man makes and are murdered at 10 times the rate of
19 the national average, even though financial independence and security
20 can increase chances of escaping violence for these women. Women's wages
21 are key to their families' economic security and survival. Across the
22 country, mothers are breadwinners in almost half of families with chil-
23 dren under 18, even though mothers face a greater pay gap than women as
24 a whole. Even prior to the pandemic, working mothers faced continued

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 biases and stigmas in the workplace that caregiving responsibilities
2 will negatively impact their work performance.

3 Women have suffered the majority of pandemic-related job losses.
4 Since February 2020, women have lost over 5,400,000 net jobs and account
5 for 55% of overall net job loss since the beginning of the crisis. Women
6 of color are experiencing higher rates of job loss than White women.
7 According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics January 2021 unemployment
8 data, the jobless rate for Black women and Latina women aged 20 and over
9 is over 60% higher than their White counterparts. Asian Americans
10 recorded the highest jobless rates among women in the last 6 months of
11 2020, even though before the pandemic their average unemployment rate
12 was the lowest.

13 Women face a disproportionate burden of caregiving responsibilities.
14 Mothers are three times more likely than fathers to be responsible for
15 most of the caregiving and household work. Single mothers are more
16 likely than other parents to take care of all housework and childcare
17 responsibilities in their household, and are more likely than other
18 mothers to experience financial insecurity.

19 Throughout the pandemic, women of color have played integral roles on
20 the frontlines as essential workers, including as nursing assistants,
21 home health aides, and child care educators.

22 Childcare is a critical lifeline for working mothers. Three-fourths
23 of mothers with children under 10 say child care is one of their top
24 three challenges during COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic, many parents
25 have had to provide remote learning support to their children. 80% of
26 mothers with children under the age of 12 have reported that they take
27 the lead on supervising their children with remote learning. School
28 closures have had a disproportionate impact on women, many of whom have
29 had to reduce their work hours, take a leave absence, or permanently
30 leave the workforce. Paid leaves helps women and other caregivers remain
31 in the workforce and supports both public health and economic recovery.

32 The unprecedented burdens of child care, work, and remote learning
33 have strained mental and emotional health for mothers. These points of
34 stressor are compounded by financial instability, racial injustice,
35 being a single parent, having children with special needs, and many
36 other factors.

37 § 2. The department of labor is hereby authorized to establish the
38 Marshall plan for moms task force to examine the following policy areas
39 and issue proposals and recommendations thereon:

40 1. The viability and implementation of providing recurring direct cash
41 payments to moms and other caregivers.

42 2. Implementation of a comprehensive paid family leave policy in the
43 state for all employers.

44 3. Rebuilding and stabilizing the childcare industry in the state
45 which addresses the lack of care infrastructure and child care deserts.

46 4. How to best revitalize and restore the role of mothers in the work-
47 force through the COVID-19 pandemic and following recovery.

48 5. How to ensure immigrant families have the ability to access
49 resources and support.

50 6. Solutions for the lack of family-supportive workplaces.

51 7. Expanding unemployment access to support New Yorkers who have to
52 leave a job or work reduced hours in order to take on caregiving respon-
53 sibilities.

54 8. Access to mental health support for mothers and other caregivers,
55 which is essential to maintaining the health of the family.

56 § 3. The task force shall be comprised of:

1 1. The commissioner of labor, the commissioner of social services, and
2 the chairperson of the workers' compensation board of the state of New
3 York, or the designees of such commissioners or such chairperson.

4 2. Two members appointed by the temporary president of the senate.

5 3. Two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly.

6 4. One member appointed by the minority leader of the senate.

7 5. One member appointed by the minority leader of the assembly.

8 § 4. Within six months of the effective date of this act, in carrying
9 out its functions, the task force shall hold five public hearings around
10 the state to foster discussions among, and conduct formal public hear-
11 ings with requisite public notice to solicit input and recommendations
12 from statewide and regional stakeholder interests. The task force shall
13 also accept public input in writing.

14 § 5. Within one year of the effective date of this act the task force
15 shall report its findings and recommendations to the governor, the
16 temporary president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly.

17 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be
18 deemed repealed 2 years after such date.