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**OVER 1,200 NEW YORKERS RALLY IN ALBANY AND DEMAND GOVERNOR PATERSON CALL FOR REAL SHARED SACRIFICE**

**Groups Who Provide Services to Seniors, Children, Homeless, Mentally Ill, People with AIDS: “Real Shared Sacrifice Includes Contribution from New York’s Wealthiest”**

Albany— As legislators returned to Albany to consider Governor Paterson’s \$2 billion in proposed midyear cuts to the state budget, over 1,200 New Yorkers called on the Governor and legislative leaders to abandon a budget policy that asks school children, local property tax payers, students at SUNY and CUNY, the elderly and New Yorkers with disabilities to sacrifice while exempting wealthy New Yorkers from helping to bear the burden of the state’s fiscal crisis.

**Michael Stoller, Executive Director, Human Services Council of New York City**, said: “Demand for social services such as child care, supportive housing, out-of-school time, employment training, and literacy programs, grows during economic downturns. To ensure these programs that help New Yorkers’ make ends meet are maintained, we must address the budget gap through a balanced approach based on the principle of shared sacrifice.”

“Every day when I visit the Hamilton-Madison House, I can see how the City’s budget cuts are affecting our Senior Center,” said **David Yang, an 82-year old New Yorker who relies on City-funded senior services**. “Before, my Center was able to serve many seniors, but now they have reduced the number of breakfasts. If I come in a little later, I am out of luck and hungry.”

The One New York: Fighting for Fairness Coalition and the Better Choice Budget Campaign— together representing more than 200 non-profit organizations, service providers, and unions that supply front line services to many of New York’s most vulnerable citizens— joined to mobilize New Yorkers appealing to Governor Paterson that shared sacrifice should include both smart, not just deep, expenditure cuts and progressive revenue options. The coalitions emphasized their willingness to contribute to budget solutions, although there are some cuts that the state cannot afford to make.

“These proposed cuts have a human cost. Many are already sacrificing, so we need a broader solution that includes developing new revenues to continue to support the programs and services our children, our elderly, our sick and our disabled depend on. We are confident that we can come together to prevent deep cuts to our safety-net. At the end of the day, New Yorkers know we are all in this together,” said **Jennifer March-Joly, Executive Director of Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York**.

“The Governor’s mid-year cuts will hit needy districts and students the hardest. These cuts will mean fewer staff and text books, less support for at risk students, and larger classes. We’ve only barely begun to act on the historic decision to correct the severe shortfall in education funding, but the Governor plans to undermine the state’s promise to provide a sound basic education for all New York students. Our children must not take second place to raising revenues. The budget should not be balanced on their backs,” added **Geri Palast, Executive Director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity**.

New York has been here before and has proven resilient in times of crisis. Following the economic downturn after September 11, the national recession, and the burst of the dot.com bubbles, New York faced a similar crisis – albeit on a smaller scale. At that time all New Yorkers were called to sacrifice. In addition to budget

cuts on critical programs for New York's children and families, New York temporarily increased income tax rates. The State employed a temporary top rate of 7.25 percent for single filers with incomes over \$100,000 and 7.7 percent on income over \$500,000. The increase expired in 2005. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, the increases had no negative economic impact. In fact, during this time, high-wage earners saw rapid income growth and the number of high-earners living in New York grew dramatically and the state experienced job growth.

"The lessons to be learned from New York's fiscal policy choices during the last two recessions are clear. The balanced approach to addressing the state's budget gap that was adopted in 2003 worked much better than the deep service cuts of the early 1990s which prolonged and deepened the effects of that recession on New York State," **said Frank Mauro, Executive Director of the Fiscal Policy Institute.**

"The Governor's notion of shared sacrifice seems to leave the wealthiest New Yorkers out of the equation," stated **Ron Deutsch, executive director, New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness.** "Our coalitions stand united in the principle that we must *not* require New York's working families to shoulder the burden of closing a deficit they did not create."

"The state should not be attempting to cut its way out of this crisis by putting the health care safety net in jeopardy. We must continue the 'patient first' health care agenda, and more wisely spend our health care dollars. Medicaid is not just about hospitals, it is first and foremost about people," said **Lara Kassel, Advocacy Coordinator at Medicaid Matters NY.**

While the Governor has suggested that a tax increase would put New York at a competitive disadvantage with neighboring states, families in New Jersey earning more than \$500,000 currently pay 8.97% in taxes, nearly a point and a half more than they would in New York under even under a Millionaire's Tax proposal.

**Denis Hughes, President of New York State AFL-CIO** said, "The labor movement recognizes the urgency of the current fiscal crisis. However, what is needed is a well thought out solution to a very complex problem. As such, we must consider a long term, responsible solution that does more than just cut our way out of this economic downturn."

"Midyear cuts are unacceptable. We must look toward next year with an eye on revenues, federal support, and efficiencies that will bring the least amount of pain to those who are already hurting the most: middle-and low-income workers and families," said **Richard Iannuzzi, President, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT).**

No less distinguished a voice than Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz recently wrote to Governor Paterson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos about the choices that await them as they confront New York's gaping deficit. Stiglitz wrote to the Governor and legislative leaders: "Increases on higher-income families are the least damaging mechanism for closing state fiscal deficits in the short run. Reductions in government spending on goods and services, or reductions in transfer payments to lower-income families, are likely to be more damaging to the economy in the short run than tax increases focused on higher-income families.[i]"

The One New York: Fighting for Fairness Coalition includes over 150 organizations and counting who advocate for and serve New Yorkers needing services such as: AIDS services, child care, child welfare, education, health care, homeless housing, housing, immigrant services, income support, legal services, people with disabilities, senior services, youth services and other vital areas services.

Organizations represented in the coalition include: The Legal Aid Society; Citizen Action of NYC; Coalition for the Homeless; Working Families Party; Education Voters of New York; Alliance for Quality Education; New York Immigration Coalition; NY ACORN; Citizens' Committee for Children of New York; Campaign for Fiscal Equity; Legal Services NYC; Human Services Council; United Neighborhood Houses; the United Federation of Teachers; Housing Works; and Medicaid Matters.

The Better Choice Budget Campaign is made up of over 100 community, religious, education, labor and human services organizations from throughout New York State— representing over million New Yorkers—who, since 2002, have been advocating for progressive revenue solutions for budget balancing.

The full text of the One New York Coalition's recent letter to the Governor and the full list of signers is below. The full list of Better Choice Budget Campaign members is also below.

## **ONE NEW YORK: FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS**

October 28, 2008

Honorable David Paterson  
Governor - New York State  
Executive Chamber  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

While all New Yorkers are reeling from the current economic crisis, few are likely to be harder hit than the poorest New Yorkers.

While New York State must show restraint in its expenditures and should invest public dollars prudently, the implementation of across the board budget reductions will lead to unimaginable human strain and decimate an already fragile social infrastructure, killing jobs and reducing spending in every community at precisely the moment when economic stimulus is needed.

At this stage in the economic cycle, budget reductions of the sort envisioned will only compound the effects of private sector job losses, further slowing the state's economy. Rather, the state must protect funding for core and safety net services to help counteract what is likely to be a severe economic downturn with increased human needs.

It is simply not possible, nor prudent for the State of New York to cut its way out of a budget deficit of the magnitude projected. The prospect of additional reductions to core and social safety net services is untenable and belies the reality that poor New Yorkers require more help, not less, in these difficult economic times.

In light of this dire economic situation, state elected officials must take necessary steps to address both sides of the budget ledger – Revenue and Expense – and fairness must be the guiding principle in this effort.

We are calling on state leaders to explicitly identify the concrete revenue raising options that they will enact – in order to protect poor New Yorkers from shouldering an undue and unjust burden of the faltering economy

Sincerely,

1199SEIU Child Care Corporation • ACORN • Advocates for Children • AIDS Community Services of Western New York • AIDS-Related Community Services, (ARCS) • AIM Independent Living Center • Alliance for Quality Education • ARISE Coalition • Asian American Federation • Barrier Free Living • Black Equity Alliance • Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled • CAMBA • Campaign for Fiscal Equity • Canaan Senior Service Center • Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY • Child Care Council - CUNY • Child Care Inc. • Children's Aid Society • Citizen Action of NY • Citizens Advice Bureau • Citizens Committee for Children of New York • Citywide Council on High Schools • Class Size Matters • Coalition for a District Alternative • Coalition for After School Funding • Coalition for Asian American Children and Families • Coalition for the Homeless • Coalition of Behavioral Health Agencies • College of Mount Saint Vincent - Institute for Immigrant Concerns • Commission on the Public's Health System • Community Access • Community Board 7, Manhattan • Community Board 11, Manhattan • Community Health Care Association of New York State • Community Voices Heard • Comunilife, Inc. • Connect, Inc. • Connecting to Advantages • Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies • Council of Senior Centers and Services of New York City, Inc. • Cypress Hills Child Care Corporation • Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation • Day Care Council of New York, Inc. • District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO • District Council 37, Local 1549, AFSCME • East Side House Settlement • Economic Justice and Social Welfare Network • Education Voters of New York • Educational Alliance • Empire Justice Center • Empire State Economic Security

Campaign • Episcopal Social Services • Erasmus Neighborhood Federation • Family Justice • Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies • FECS • Fiscal Policy Institute • Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project/Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees • Freedom Community Center • Friends and Relatives of Institutionalized Aged, Inc. • Gay Men's Health Crisis • Goddard Riverside Community Center • Good Jobs New York • Grand Street Settlement House • Greater Chinatown Community Association • Haitian Americans United for Progress • Hamilton-Madison House • HANAC, Inc. • Harlem Independent Living Center • Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc. • Henry Street Settlement • Highbridge Community Life Center • Hispanic AIDS Forum, Inc. • Hispanic Federation of New York State • Hispanic Senior Action Counsel • HIV Law Project, Inc. • Homeless Services United • Housing Works • Hudson Guild • Human Services Council • Hunger Action Network of New York State • Institute for Community Living • Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, Inc. • Internationals Network for Public Schools • Isabella Geriatric Center • Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults • Jewish Child Care Association • Korean American Family Service Center • Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. • Korean Family Counseling and Research Center • Legal Action Center • Legal Aid Society • Legal Information for Families Today • Legal Services NYC • Lenox Hill Neighborhood House • Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, Inc. • Long Island Progressive Coalition • Lower East Side Family Union • Make the Road New York • Medicare Rights Center • Melrose Senior Center • Metro Justice • Metro New York Health Care for All Campaign • MFY Legal Services • Midwood Development Corp. • Mosholu Montefiore Community Center • NAACP Metropolitan Council • National Association of Social Workers, NYC Chapter • National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS • National Center for Schools and Communities at Fordham • Neighborhood Family Services Coalition • New Settlement Apartments • New York AIDS Coalition • New York Citizens' Committee on Aging, Inc. • New York City Central Labor Council • New York City Employment and Training Coalition • New York Civic Participation Project/32BJ • New York Immigrant Coalition • New York State Coalition for School Based Health Center • New York State NAACP • New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness • NY Jobs with Justice • New York City AIDS Housing Network • NYC Coalition for Educational Justice • New York State Child Care Coordinating Council • New York State Public Employees Federation, Region 10 • New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness • One Stop Senior Services • Partnership For The Homeless • Phipps Community Development Corporation • Pratt Center for Community Development • Professional Staff Congress - CUNY • Project FIND • Project Renewal • Safe Horizon • SCAN-New York • Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy • SEIU Local 32BJ • Service Program for Older People, Inc. • Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, Inc. • Staten Island Inter-Agency Council for the Aging • Staten Island Legal Services • Strycker's Bay Neighborhood Council, Inc. • Supportive Housing Network of New York • Tenants Political Action Committee • The After-School Corporation • The AIDS Council of Northeastern New York • The Arab-American Family Support Center • The Bridge Inc. • The Bronx Health Link • The Center for Arts Education • The Center for Law and Social Justice, Medgar Evers College- CUNY • The Children's Village • The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. • The Bridge Inc. • The Fortune Society • The Geriatric Mental Health Alliance of New York • The International Center in New York • The Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development • The School for International Studies • Thorpe Family Residence, Inc. • Time Out from Testing • UAW LOCAL 2325 Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (AFL-CIO) • UAW Region 9A • United Community Centers, Inc. • United Federation of Teachers • United Neighborhood Houses • University Settlement Society • Urban Justice Center • Urban Pathways, Inc. • Village Care of New York • Violence Intervention Program, Inc. • VIP Community Services • Welfare Reform Network • Welfare Rights Initiative • West Side Campaign Against Hunger • Westchester Disabled On the Move Inc. • Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation • Working Families Party • YKASEC-Empowering the Korean American Community

## **Organizations Supporting Better Choice Budget Campaign**

ACCORD Corp.  
Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc.  
AFSCME New York  
Albany Presbytery  
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)-Local 1151  
ARISE (A Regional Initiative to Support Empowerment)  
Association to Benefit Children  
Capital Area council of Churches  
Capital district Community Loan Fund  
Capital Region Ecumenical Organization  
Center for Working Families  
Central New York Citizens in Action, Inc  
Chemung County Housing Coalition  
NYS Child Care Coordinating Council  
Citizen Action of New York State  
Citizens Committee for Children of New York  
Citizens Environmental Coalition  
Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)  
Class Size Matters  
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families  
Coalition for Economic Justice (Buffalo)  
Coalition for the Homeless  
Community Service Society  
Cortland County Community Action Program  
Delaware Opportunities Inc.  
District Council 1707 (DC-1707)  
District Council 37 (DC-37)  
Dutchess Outreach, Inc.  
Elmira Community Kitchen  
Empire Justice Center  
Empire State Economic Security Campaign (ES2)  
Environmental Advocates of New York State  
Faith and Hunger Network of NYS  
Fiscal Policy Institute  
FOCUS Churches of Albany  
Grace Smith House, Inc. (Rochester)  
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition  
Greater NY Labor-Religion Coalition  
Green Education and Legal Fund  
Grey Panthers - NYC  
Health and Welfare Council of Long Island  
HELP USA  
Homeless Alliance of WNY, Inc. (Buffalo)  
House of Mercy, Rochester  
Housing Works, Inc.  
Hunger Action Network of NYS  
Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties  
Justice and Peace Center  
Labor-Religion Coalition – Chemung County  
Labor-Religion Coalition of the Capital District  
Leviticus 25:23 Alternative Fund, Inc  
Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service  
Lutheran Statewide Advocacy  
Medicaid Matters  
Metro Justice (Rochester)  
MicroBizBuffalo  
MicroBizNewYork

Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency  
Mount Vernon United Tenants  
Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS  
New York City Coalition Against Hunger  
New York City AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)  
New York Children's Action Network (NYCAN)  
New York Jobs with Justice  
New York State AFL-CIO  
New York State Alliance for Retired Americans  
New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV)  
New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA)  
New York State Episcopal Public Policy Network  
New York State Labor Religion Coalition  
New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)  
New York State Weatherization Directors Association  
New York Statewide Senior Action Council  
New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness  
Nurses United CWA Local 1168  
Nutrition Consortium of NYS  
NY Universal Living Wage Campaign  
NYC AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)  
Opportunities for Broome, Inc.  
Partnership for the Homeless  
Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo Coalition)  
Prevent Child Abuse New York  
Progressive Research & Action Center, Inc.  
Public Employees Federation (PEF)  
Public Policy and Education Fund  
Public Utility Law Project (PULP)  
Real Majority Project (Poughkeepsie)  
Regional Synod of Albany, Reformed Church in American  
Rochester Poor People's Alliance  
Rural Housing Coalition of NYS  
Rural Opportunities, Inc.  
Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.  
Schenectady Community Action Program  
Schenectady Inner City Ministry  
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA)  
Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter  
Sisters of Charity of New York, Office of Justice and Peace  
Southern Tier Labor-Religion Coalition  
Staten Island Welfare Advocacy Network  
The Interfaith Alliance of NYS  
Unity House  
Van Wie Group, LLC  
Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency  
Welfare Rights Initiative of Hunter College  
West Side Campaign Against Hunger  
Westchester Community Opportunity Program  
Westchester Progressive Forum  
Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement  
Women's Enterprise Development Center