



**Statement on New Child Poverty Data**  
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New census data lay out in stark terms the impact of the economic downturn on children in New York City. Importantly, we know that early approaches to the economic crisis advanced a combination of federal stimulus funds, tax increases, and budget reductions, while recent actions taken on the local, state, and national level have focused almost exclusively on budget cuts. These reductions have compounded the negative impact of the recession and have weakened the economy and our safety net, which has put low-income households on the edge with lost jobs; declining investments in public schools, child care, and after school programs; and cuts to basic community supports. The alarming new census data demonstrates that budget cuts have moved us in the wrong direction, and demands an urgent reexamination of tax policy.

We need to return to a balanced approach of managing the economic crisis, in which everyone must share in the sacrifice. While national leaders spar over proposals to nominally increase taxes for wealthy individuals, New York State could raise \$5 billion a year in much-needed revenue by simply extending the existing surcharge on personal income tax for individuals earning over \$250,000 annually. These resources could be spent shoring up the critical social safety net on which an ever-increasing number of New York children and families rely. At the local level, we should also recall how City residents joined together during the recession that followed 9/11 by supporting a temporary and progressive increase in City income taxes. This temporary tax increase enabled the City to get out from under an economic downturn and to protect children and families with continued investments in essential public services.

Sadly, we stand at a crossroads. The new child poverty data suggests that we may lose an entire generation of children to this recession if we do not act now. It is incumbent upon all of us to encourage our local, state and national officials to demonstrate real leadership and to place the interests of our youngest citizens before their own popularity and political fortune. Time is of the essence and the future of our children, our City, our State and our Country are at stake.