



NY State Senate Passes Bill to Increase the Number of Family Court Judges!
CCC Urges the State Assembly to Act!

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Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc. is extremely pleased that last night the New York State Senate passed the bill that increases the number of Family Court Judges by 21 statewide, 7 of which would be for New York City. CCC commends Senator Sampson's leadership on this critical issue and for once again taking steps to ensure the bill passed in the Senate. CCC is urging the New York State Assembly to also make vulnerable and at-risk children a priority and pass A8597, the Assembly bill that would increase the number of Family Court Judges.

There is a crisis in New York State's Family Courts. Overburdened court calendars are leading to long adjournments and incredible court delays. Judges cannot hear cases timely- so children are languishing in foster care. In New York City, the average caseload for a child protective judge was over 2,000 cases in 2008. CCC estimates that given the number of court days each year, this means that on average a Family Court Judge could spend no more than 42 minutes each year on a child's case. This is 42 minutes to decide whether there has been abuse or neglect, whether the child needs to be in foster care, how often the child can visit parents and siblings, and most importantly whether the child can safely return home or whether the child should be adopted. Children only have one childhood - they deserve better than to grow up in foster care because of court delay. Justice delayed is justice denied for children and their families. CCC urges the New York State Assembly to bring A8597A to a vote before the legislative session ends and to vote YES to decrease court delay by increasing the number of Family Court Judges.