

Governor Kathy Hochul  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

**Re: Act Now to Bridge the Benefits Cliff**

Dear Governor Hochul:

Underemployed and low-income workers in New York State often remain trapped in a cycle of poverty because the structure of social service benefits discourages economic mobility and career progression. Action is needed from the New York State Legislature to address this issue.

Addressing the benefits cliff would encourage workers to pursue career advancement. It would help employers retain and promote quality employees. It would also save taxpayer dollars by helping workers grow independent from social service benefits.

Policy actions that would address the Benefits Cliff include:

1. Enact a six-month benefit disregard, which will encourage workers to take career leaps. S.8374A (Persaud) / A.10155A (Davila) would do this at proper income thresholds. This six-month investment would save the state from paying a lifetime of benefits.
2. Allow training program enrollment to satisfy benefit program work requirements. Workers advancing their careers through qualified training programs should not be denied benefits as a result.
3. Update asset caps for collecting social service benefits. Workers who responsibly save their income are being denied social service benefits because they own assets above an unacceptably low threshold. S.2705 (Persaud) would update this threshold appropriately.
4. Convene social service experts to study benefit adjustments and eliminate the cliff once and for all. Collaboration is needed among social service administrators to identify the structure of benefit programs and recommend changes to state policy to eliminate the benefits cliff and ensure higher earned income results in a higher quality of life. S.7830A (Persaud) / A.8431 (Davila) – which currently sits on Governor Hochul’s desk – would create a task force to do so.

By enacting this agenda, the state can encourage economic mobility, support employers, and save taxpayers money. Please champion this legislation to Bridge the Benefits Cliff & make passing it a priority in the 2025 session.

Sincerely,