

Diocesan Public Policy Advocacy Weekend - February 12/13, 2022

- Bulletin Education - January 22/23

2022 Diocesan Public Policy Weekend – February 12th & 13th *Care for the Marginalized through an Equitable & Just NYS Budget*

Do you know that nearly 1 in 5 children ages 0-4 in New York live in poverty? Do you know that children ages 0-4 are *not* covered in the Empire State Child Credit? Modest increases in income to low-income families can yield tremendous benefits for children and their families, including improved physical, emotional and behavioral health, and higher educational achievement. **The benefits are particularly significant – and most acutely needed – in families with young children.** Families with young children face poverty at greater rates than other families. In fact, the birth of a child is the leading trigger of “poverty spells” experienced by families. In addition, stress and hunger can impair brain development, which is most rapid when children are very young, and can lead to lifelong deficits. Strengthening family economic security improves the lives not only for the current generation of children, but the next, because poor children are much more likely to grow up to be poor adults. Our Diocesan Public Policy Committee is encouraging everyone to **sign the petition calling for an Equitable and Just NYS Budget** on February 12/13 – *Diocesan Public Policy Advocacy Weekend*. You can sign the petition online at <https://www.dor.org/petition/> or sign the copy that will be in your bulletin on February 5/6. Bring it to mass on February 12/13. Thank you for caring about babies and toddlers.

- Bulletin Education - January 29/30

2022 Diocesan Public Policy Weekend – February 12th & 13th *Care for the Marginalized through an Equitable & Just Budget*

The pandemic has been emotionally hard on all of us, unfortunately it has been harder on some than others. **Did you know** that overdose deaths have increased by 38%. Over 40% of people have reported mental health concerns. To make matters worse, as this need has spiked, providers have been unable to maintain the critical staff who can provide assistance. We are asking the Governor and New York State to invest in our behavioral health providers by including a long-delayed COLA increase and a \$500 million investment in workforce development, service, and support in the Executive Budget. We are hoping that this will permit service providers to continue this most vital service. Jesus preached the need to care for one another – we cannot leave people going untreated in their time of most need!

Learn more, and sign the petition for an Equitable and Just NYS Budget at <https://www.dor.org/petition/>

- Bulletin Education - February 5/6

**2022 Diocesan Public Policy Weekend – February 12th & 13th
*Care for the Marginalized through an Equitable & Just NYS Budget***

Next weekend is Diocesan Public Policy Weekend! We will have an opportunity to speak up for the babies/toddlers growing up in poverty in our community and for community mental/behavioral health services. Our message to the Governor and state leaders:

In order to be truly “New York Strong” we must first take care of those most vulnerable in our state. One way to do this is to create a budget that uses equity and justice as its guiding principles. There are many important initiatives that need to be supported, but two that we would like to advocate for are the closing of the *NYS Child Tax Credit loophole* so that it will cover those who are most vulnerable - children ages 0-4. The second issue we are raising up is our concern for the over 40% of New Yorkers who have reported struggles with their mental health during the pandemic, many of whom have not been able to receive the treatment they need due to lack of providers. Many service providers are finding it extremely difficult to provide the critical services at current rates. Therefore, *we are also petitioning for a 5.4% COLA and a \$500 million investment in workforce, service, and support in the Executive Budget.*

Please sign the letter to Governor Hochul (attached to this bulletin) bring it with you to Mass next weekend or sign the petition for an *Equitable and Just NYS Budget* at <https://www.dor.org/petition/> !