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 STATE OF NEW YORK
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 Legislative Women's Caucus
 New Americans
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February 12, 2026

Honorable Speaker Carl E. Heastie
 New York State Assembly
 932 Legislative Office Building
 Albany, NY 12248

Re: Task Force on Women's Issues Budget Priorities

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The Task Force on Women's Issues is requesting that you include the following priorities in the Assembly's one-house budget:

- **\$30 million for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Special Supplemental Nutrition Program** - As federal resources for Medicaid and SNAP are being cut, and our most vulnerable New Yorkers face the threat of greater insecurity, funding and protecting programs like WIC becomes more important than ever. WIC has different eligibility requirements than SNAP, making it more accessible, especially for our immigrant neighbors. This funding will allow for continued access to crucial food and nutrition resources for more families.
- **\$200,000 for Women In Need (WIN)** - WIN is on the frontlines of addressing the family homelessness crisis in all five boroughs of New York City. Providing a holistic approach of support, providing not only shelter but trauma-informed programming and services that meet the needs of each member of a family, WIN is seeing quantifiable results: 93% of families who leave WIN for housing are still stably housed a year later. This funding will allow WIN to safeguard its services and ability to nimbly respond to the evolving needs of our families and communities.
- **\$10.7 million for the New York Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act ([A04018/S06983](#))** - Black women have a maternal mortality rate that is more than three

[times](#) that of white women; in a [2024 report](#) by the New York State Health Department, it was found that Black, non-Hispanic women had a maternal mortality rate five times higher than White, non-Hispanic women in New York State.

- **\$1 million for the Department of Corrections to conduct a Gender Disparity Study (A04503/S06389)** - While New York's prison population has been on the decline in recent years, this decline is skewed by gender: the number of men in prison has declined by 10%, while the number of women in prison has declined by only 5%. To understand this disparity, a comprehensive study investigating whether there are adequate resources in women's correctional facilities to ensure their needs are being met and that they are being adequately prepared for reintegration back into the community must be funded.
- **\$50 million for the Gender Affirming Care Fund (A08841/S07924)**- A nationwide survey conducted by the Advocates for Trans Equality in 2022 found that [“28% of respondents](#) did not see a healthcare provider in the year before the survey due to cost” and [24% of respondents](#) did not seek treatment in that same time period before the survey due to fear that they would be disrespected or mistreated as a result of their gender identity. This funding for the Gender Affirming Care Fund would increase access to healthcare for Transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and Intersex New Yorkers during a time when such access and protections are under attack at the federal level.
- **\$1.92 million for Displaced Homemaker Centers** - For nearly 50 years, the Displaced Homemaker Program has helped more than one million women become self-sufficient through employment counseling, workforce development training, computer instruction, and job placement services. However, the FY2026 cut to their budget has impeded their ability to provide their critically needed services. This restoration and increase in funding will protect this programming and continue the work to end the cycle of poverty.
- **\$30 million for the Reproductive Freedom and Equity Program (RFEP)** - Consistent attacks on reproductive rights by the federal administration and the overturning of Roe v. Wade in 2022 have created significant barriers to accessing care and the resources to provide treatment. The funding provided through this grant program will support providers' advanced access to care for all who need it.
- **\$25 million to Sustain Grant Funding to Support the Provision of Medication Abortion and Care Later in Pregnancy** - Providers have yet to receive the \$25 million appropriated to them last year, money that was to address the medicaid shortfalls in reimbursing for medication abortion and care later in pregnancy. This funding continues to be in vital need, and must be implemented in this year's budget.
- **\$600 million for Age Parity with Tier 4** - A Tier 6 member under current age requirements must work until age 63, up to 40 years of service, to retire with no penalty. Comparatively, a Tier 4 member can retire at 55 with 30 years of service. This inequity is felt by all Tier 6 members, but especially by women who, due to caregiving responsibilities, are more likely to have a separation in service. Achieving parity for Tier 6 members is not just a worker justice issue, but a gender justice issue.

The New York State Assembly and you, Mr. Speaker, have been steadfast on issues of gender equity and justice, advancing safety and opportunity for all New Yorkers. By including our requests as stated, this critical work will continue to be supported across the state. We thank you for your commitment and your leadership on women's issues and gender equity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'JR' in a cursive, stylized font.

Jessica González-Rojas
Member of Assembly, 34th AD
Chair, Task Force on Women's Issues