



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

December 2, 2014

Dear Governor:

As members of the New York State Assembly, we are writing to urge you, as you draft the Executive Budget for the coming school year, to address the needs of schools in New York educating an influx of newly arrived unaccompanied alien children requiring English as a Second Language classes and additional tutoring to simply catch up to their peers.

More than 3,000 unaccompanied minors have been reported to be released to relatives or other sponsors in Nassau, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester Counties so far this year. Having fled violence and poverty in their own Central American countries, they have complex social, health and educational needs that New York State is obligated to address, regardless of their immigration status. While much of their initial care is provided for by the federal government, most children arriving here are placed with families and guardians, and will likely continue to live in our communities as they await decisions on their immigration status.

Schools identified as incurring spikes in enrollment of unaccompanied minors, mostly in areas with high immigrant populations, will need to help care for and educate these children. We propose a special categorical program be established on a temporary, two-year, up-front (rather than reimbursement) basis, targeting funds to the specific schools dealing with the enrollment of unaccompanied minors. Many of these districts, such as Hempstead, Brentwood, and Central Islip on Long Island and East Ramapo in Rockland County, are already facing extraordinary challenges educating attending students.

We truly hope you consider this proposal and include additional funding for this purpose. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Marcos Crespo in black ink.

Marcos Crespo
New York State Assembly Member
Chair, Task Force on New Americans

Handwritten signature of Philip Ramos in black ink.

Phil Ramos
New York State Assembly Member
6th Assembly District

CC: Dr. John B. King, Jr., Commissioner
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

BCC: Louann Ciccone