

# GOVERNOR PATERSON'S ECONOMIC SECURITY CABINET

is pleased to announce

## REGIONAL TOWN HALL MEETINGS

to receive comments on

New York State's efforts to protect and enhance the economic security of low-income families

In this national economic downturn, Governor Paterson has charged his Economic Security Cabinet with exploring opportunities to support struggling low-income families. These Town Hall meetings will provide an opportunity to hear about the State's commitment to protecting and enhancing economic security. Suggestions from employers, labor representatives, researchers, advocates, and the general public are a vital part of this effort, and interested individuals are invited to provide written submissions and/or 3 minutes of in-person testimony. (A summary of the preliminary recommendations before the Economic Security Cabinet can be found on the second page of this announcement.)

Further information about the Economic Security Cabinet and the regional Town Hall meetings – and registration information for the meetings - can be obtained at the Economic Security Cabinet website – <http://economicsecurity.us>.

### TOWN HALL MEETING DATES and LOCATIONS

→ All meetings will begin promptly at 4:00 PM and end at 7:00 PM ←

June 12	Capital Region – <i>Schenectady Community College</i>
June 19	Western NY Region – <i>Erie Community College-Downtown</i>
June 25	Finger Lakes Region – <i>Rochester City Hall</i>
June 26	Central NY Region – <i>Onondaga Community College</i>
July 1	Southern Tier Region - <i>Broome Community College</i>
July 7	Mohawk Valley Region - <i>Mohawk Valley Community College</i>
July 16	North Country Region – 2 simultaneous sessions: <i>Jefferson Community College; Clinton Community College</i>
July 24	Mid-Hudson Region – <i>Orange County Community College-Newburgh Campus</i>
July 28	New York City Region – 2 simultaneous sessions: <i>Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building; Brooklyn Borough Hall</i>
July 30	Long Island Region – <i>Farmingdale State College</i>
July 31	New York City Region – <i>York College/CUNY</i>

A demonstration of the State's new *myBenefits.ny.us* website will be provided at each session. This prototype will assist individuals in understanding what benefits are available and help estimate eligibility for the benefits.

## **Governor Paterson's Economic Security Commitments** and a **Summary of Recommendations before the Economic Security Cabinet**

Guiding the Cabinet's work has been the Governor's commitment to working families. Among these commitments, in 2008:

- ✓ Uninsured children are being enrolled in public health insurance programs
- ✓ Access to the Food Stamp Program is being expanded for low-income working families
- ✓ The State's capital investment in affordable and supportive housing increased by \$200 million
- ✓ The Career Pathways program is being launched to help disconnected youth and public assistance recipients develop the skills to achieve sustainable wage jobs
- ✓ Improvements for quality educational outcomes will continue with the record investments in pre-Kindergarten programs
- ✓ High-speed Internet access will be made more accessible to low-income families, both for educational purposes and for e-government access to State programs
- ✓ Home ownership counseling programs will help families avoid foreclosures
- ✓ A new web site was launched – [www.myBenefits.ny.gov](http://www.myBenefits.ny.gov) – that will provide a single internet portal for New York State's families and community partners to connect with benefits, services and work supports – an e-government hub for human services
- ✓ Aggressive enforcement of the State's labor laws will continue in order to help ensure that all workers are paid the minimum wage and receive all other legal protections

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

*Working families and individuals should have easy access to the full range of benefits and tax credits that the state and federal governments provide:*

- ✓ Simplify the processes for applying for benefits – such as nutrition benefits, health benefits, and tax credits - and use technology to share commonly-requested information to streamline the need to ask for information over and over.
- ✓ Create a statewide “brand” recognizable to all working families that will make obtaining information easy. Create a standard page for state agency websites – based on the “*Resources for Working Families*” web page - that working people can use for information about programs and resources.
- ✓ Provide information about benefits and how to apply for them targeted to those seeking or receiving unemployment insurance.

*The workforce development system should support the needs of lower-wage workers and their employers through better coordination and alignment with the education and economic development sectors:*

- ✓ Expand job opportunities for disadvantaged or underemployed lower-wage workers by increasing the use of existing *federal* employer tax credits.
- ✓ Focus on helping lower-wage workers advance. Develop and implement career advancement strategies, linked to educational advancement, to enhance the potential for economic advancement of low-income workers.
- ✓ Be sure youth have access to career and employment opportunities to provide them the necessary exposure to the world of work.
- ✓ Improve access to education and training by low-income workers. Utilize distance learning strategies to the extent possible, particularly for basic skills training and English language learning assistance.
- ✓ Create one consistent regional structure for the workforce development and economic development systems. Use this new regional structure to align policies and funding sources to create locally-based solutions to address the skill, recruitment, and retention needs of key industries, as well as the career advancement needs of the State's lower-wage workers.
- ✓ Coordinate the State's labor market research resources to identify and help address gaps between economic and educational development strategies and labor market plans.
- ✓ Re-invigorate and strengthen the State Workforce Investment Board, to ensure that the entire workforce system best supports workers' needs for career and economic advancement.
- ✓ Develop a definition of a 21<sup>st</sup> century One-Stop Career Center for the State.

To register for any of the Economic Security Cabinet town hall meetings or reserve a few minutes to speak, please visit the Cabinet's web site at

<http://economicsecurity.us>