



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

**MEMORANDUM**

To: James Reardon, Commissioner of Finance & Management  
From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst  
Date: August 25, 2010  
Subject: JFO #2457

No Joint Fiscal Committee member has requested that the following items be held for review:

**JFO #2457** — \$134,500 donation from the Vermont Community Foundation to the Department of Children and Families. This donation will serve as state match to drawn down \$538,000 million federal funding. This funding will support a one-time issuance of a food benefit on an electronic benefit card to low income families with children.

*[JFO received 8/24/10]*

The Governor's approval may now be considered final. We ask that you inform the Secretary of Administration and your staff of this action.

cc: Stephen Dale, Commissioner



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Joint Fiscal Committee Members  
From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst  
Date: August 24, 2010  
Subject: Grant Request

Enclosed please find one (1) request that the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the administration.

The administration requested expedited review of this item. Preliminary materials supporting this donation were distributed to Joint Fiscal Committee members last week, with the request that any concerns or objections be raised immediately. **No objections to granting expedited approval of this item have been received.** The attached package serves as the administration's official submission, but **no action is required.** This information is for your records only.

**JFO #2457** — \$134,500 donation from the Vermont Community Foundation to the Department of Children and Families. This donation will serve as state match to drawn down \$538,000 (one state dollar draws down four federal dollars). This funding will support a one-time issuance of a food benefit on an electronic benefit card to low income families with children. **The administration has requested expedited approval of this item.**

*[JFO received 8/24/10]*

Questions about this donation or the approval process can be directed to the Joint Fiscal Office (Nathan Lavery at (802) 828-1488; [nlavery@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:nlavery@leg.state.vt.us)).

STATE OF VERMONT  
GRANT ACCEPTANCE FORM

DATE: August 17, 2010

DEPARTMENT: AHS/ DCF

GRANT/DONATION (brief description and purpose): Provide funding for Back to School Lunch Program in 3 Squares VT – Use as an ARRA reimbursement match

GRANTOR/DONOR: Vermont Community Foundation and Private Donors

GRANT PERIOD: 8/1/2010- 9/30/2010

AMOUNT/VALUE: ~~\$5,000,000~~ \$134,500.00 <sup>RM</sup>

POSITIONS REQUESTED (LIMITED SERVICE): None

ANY ON-GOING, LONG-TERM COSTS TO THE STATE: N/A

COMMENTS:

DEPT. FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT:  
SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION:  
SENT TO JOINT FISCAL OFFICE:

(INITIAL) SP 8/17/10  
(INITIAL) SP 8/17/10  
(DATE) 8/24/10

*my 8/23/10*

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION				
1. Agency:	Human Services			
2. Department:	Children and Families			
3. Program:	Economic Services 3 Squares Vermont			
4. Legal Title of Grant:	EBT Summer Food Benefit Program			
5. Federal Catalog #:				
6. Grant/Donor Name and Address:				
7. Grant Period:	From:	8/1/2010	To:	9/30/2010
8. Purpose of Grant: Provide funding for Back to School Lunch Program in 3 Squares Vermont - use as an ARRA reimbursement match.				
9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted:				
10. BUDGET INFORMATION				
	SFY 1	SFY 2	SFY 3	Comments
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>	<b>FY</b>	<b>FY</b>	
Personal Services	\$	\$	\$	
Operating Expenses	\$	\$	\$	
Grants	\$672,500	\$	\$	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$672,500</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	
<b>Revenues:</b>				
State Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
Cash	\$	\$	\$	
In-Kind	\$	\$	\$	
Federal Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
(Direct Costs)	\$538,000	\$	\$	
(Statewide Indirect)	\$	\$	\$	
(Departmental Indirect)	\$	\$	\$	
Other Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
Grant (source Donations)	\$134,500	\$	\$	<i>← This AA-1 is for approval of the donation portion only.</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$672,500</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	
Appropriation No:		Amount:	\$	
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	

**STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)**

**PERSONAL SERVICE INFORMATION**

**11. Will monies from this grant be used to fund one or more Personal Service Contracts?**  Yes  No  
 If "Yes", appointing authority must initial here to indicate intent to follow current competitive bidding process/policy.

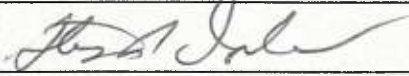
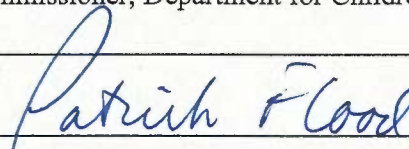
Appointing Authority Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agreed by: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

12. Limited Service Position Information:	# Positions	Title
<b>Total Positions</b>		


**12a. Equipment and space for these positions:**  Is presently available.  Can be obtained with available funds.

**13. AUTHORIZATION AGENCY/DEPARTMENT**

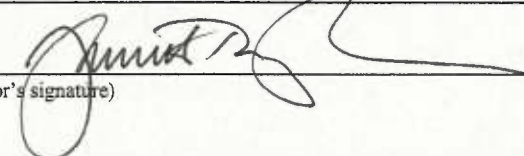
I/we certify that no funds beyond basic application preparation and filing costs have been expended or committed in anticipation of Joint Fiscal Committee approval of this grant, unless previous notification was made on Form AA-1PN (if applicable):

Signature: 	Date: August 4, 2010
Title: Commissioner, Department for Children and Families	
Signature: 	Date: 8/13/10
Title: _____	

**14. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary or designee signature)  Date: 8/10/10

**15. ACTION BY GOVERNOR**

Check One Box: Accepted  Date: 8/24/10

Rejected \_\_\_\_\_ (Governor's signature) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED**

**Required GRANT Documentation**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request Memo                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Donation (if any)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dept. project approval (if applicable) | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant (Project) Timeline (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Award                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Extension (if applicable)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Agreement                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Form AA-1PN attached (if applicable)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Budget                           |   |

**End Form AA-1**



Department for Children and Families  
Commissioner's Office 5 North  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-5920  
(802) 241-1942 Fax (802) 241-2980  
[www.dcf.state.vt.us](http://www.dcf.state.vt.us)

*File*

To: Rob Hofmann, AHS Secretary

For: Governor Douglas  
Members of the Joint Fiscal Committee:  
Representative Michael Obuchowski, Chair  
Senator Ann Cummings, Vice Chair  
Senator Diane Snelling, Clerk  
Representative Janet Ancel  
Senator Susan Bartlett  
Representative Carolyn Branagan  
Representative Martha Heath  
Representative Mark Larson  
Senator Peter Shumlin  
Senator Richard Sears

From: Stephen *R. Dale*, Commissioner for Department for Children and Families

Date: July 23, 2010

Re: Request for approval pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5 for acceptance of donated funds provided in support of a back to school food benefit for low income families with children which will also facilitate the draw down of federal ARRA funds.

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This packet of materials forms a request for the Governor's approval and, subject to his approval, a request for approval from the Joint Fiscal Committee to allow the Department for Children and Families to accept funds from the Vermont Community Foundation. These funds will support a one-time issuance of a food benefit on an electronic benefit card to low income families with children. For every dollar donated, the state will contribute \$4 to the benefit. All of the state's contribution shall be reimbursed by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

This packet consists of the following:

1. Cover memorandum.
2. Memorandum in Support of Request for Approval of Acceptance of Donations – This memorandum explains the project, the benefits, and responds to the necessary information required by 32 V.S.A. § 5.
3. One page draft information document to be provided to potential donor fund representatives to explain project and benefit.
4. Press release from Governor Paterson and George Soros about a similar benefit provided in New York.



## **Memorandum in Support of Request for Approval of Acceptance of Donations**

**Background:** The federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant program was appropriated funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These funds were available to states as reimbursement for qualifying expenditures in three specified areas (short-term needs, subsidized employment, and basic needs). Reimbursement is limited to 80 percent of the difference between the amount spent in the current expenditure and the similar type of expenditure spent in the base year (either FFY 2007 or 2008, whichever the federal agency determines to be more beneficial to the state). With the encouragement of the Administration and the General Assembly, the Department for Children and Families, Economic Services Division (ESD) has been on a mission to bring all available TANF ARRA funds to Vermont through a variety of expenditures. The focus of this request is the back to school electronic benefit transfer (EBT) food benefit which, like the 3SquaresVT (formerly food stamps), is distributed on an EBT card and can only be used to purchase food. The purpose of this benefit was to address childhood hunger in Vermont during the transition from summer back to school; it is a time when families with children experience financial stress due to back to school costs and the absence of school feeding programs during the summer months.

As only 80 percent of the expenditure is reimbursed, ESD has been working for over a year to find federally-approved 20 percent in-kind donations from community organizations; this in-kind donation combined with an eligible state expenditure equal to 80 percent would permit the state to recover its entire expenditure. Obtaining the 20 percent in donations became a daunting task. While community partners were willing, the federal requirements of certifying the partners' expenditures and the restrictions on what expenditures could be countable limited the potential donations to a meaningless amount relative to ARRA reimbursement. Time is a consideration because the expenditures for which a state can claim ARRA reimbursement must be expended by September 30, 2010.

In a last ditch effort, ESD met with a representative of the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF). The representative seemed interested in helping to get in-kind donors to support ESD's food benefit until ESD explained the federal requirements and limitations on such claims. At this point, the representative became more skeptical of the availability of committed in-kind donations. ESD lamented how in NY they were fortunate to receive a large cash donation from the George Soros foundation which was used to purchase school clothing for low-income children and to draw down ARRA funds. The representative again became interested and asked for a week to talk to potential donors about making cash donations and holding a donors teleconference to answer questions. As soon as ESD realized the potential for these cash donations, the deputy commissioner and finance division were notified about the opportunity.

The donor conference is tentatively scheduled for the end of July or beginning of August; at this time there is no way to predict the amount of donations. The current plan for collection follows:

1. The Vermont Community Foundation will accept all the donations in the form they choose for their financial system, while maintaining records on the donors, a statement by each donor that the funds donated are not federal funds or funds used for federal match, a statement of the donor's intent to have the donation used to fund the EBT back to school benefit, and amount of the donation.
2. The Vermont Community Foundation will provide a certified check (or some other guaranteed payment) to the State of Vermont on or before the date necessary to distribute the benefit with a statement that is it for the purpose of funding a portion of the EBT back to school food benefit.

3. At the time the Vermont Community Foundation provides the donation to the Department of Children and Families, it will also provide the department with the statement from and the information about each donor and the individual donor amounts.

Statutory Requirements

In accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 5 (Acceptance of grants), while the department has authority to accept donations<sup>1</sup>, it cannot accept the money until after it is submitted to the governor who shall send a copy of his approval or rejection to the joint fiscal committee with the information specified in the statute. The statutory subsections follow with the required information provided in *italic print*:

(A) the source of the grant, gift or loan – *The source of the money is from private donors;*

(B) the legal and referenced titles of the grant – *This section is inapplicable; 33 V.S.A. § 104(b)(4) permits the department for children and families to receive and disburse funds which are donated to it for charitable purposes or for the benefit of recipients of assistance or benefits;*

(C) the costs, direct and indirect, for the present and future years related to such a grant – *There are no future years' costs as this is a one-time distribution. As for costs of the present distribution - the only known costs are staff time (much of which has already been expended) and the cost of making the distribution which will be covered by the ARRA reimbursement;*

(D) the department and/or program which will utilize the grant – *The Department for Children and Families, Economic Services Division will utilize the grant to fund 20 percent of the EBT food benefit to low income families with minor children who meet 3SquaresVT financial eligibility. This will permit the state to get full reimbursement of ARRA funds for its costs. It will also assist the recipient families with food costs which they will pass on to Vermont food merchants in the purchase of food items;*

(E) brief statement of purpose - *The purpose of the potential donation is to provide a food purchase benefit to low income families with minor children who on September 1, 2010 are financially eligible for Vermont's 3SQVT program, formerly food stamps,. The benefit will go to families on an electronic benefit card that they can use at local grocery stores to purchase food in September. The size of the families' benefit will depend upon the number of minor children in the household and the generosity of our donors.*

(F) impact on existing programs if grant is not accepted. *No impact on existing programs, but if the department cannot accept the funds this is likely to limit the state's ability to draw federal ARRA funds.*

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<sup>1</sup> According to 33 V.S.A. § 104(b)(4), the department for children and families may receive and disburse funds which are donated to it for charitable purposes or for the benefit of recipients of assistance or benefits.



**The Vermont Department for Children and Families in partnership with the Vermont Community Foundation needs your help in bringing federal stimulus funds to Vermont to feed our hungry children.**

**The Need**

- 23,000 Vermont children under 18 live in food insecure households.
- Nationally Vermont ranks sixth highest in food insecurity for children.
- One-third of Vermont children grow up in low income families.
- One in every eight Vermont children is living below the poverty line.

As summer comes to an end and the start of school approaches, families experience increased financial stress. This time of financial strain is exacerbated by the absence of child feeding programs, such as school breakfast and lunch programs and summer camp or recreation food programs, during this time of year.

**How can Vermont address this need?**

Federal stimulus funds are available to help feed these children, but they must be spent soon! The Vermont Department for Children and Families wants your help in accessing these funds to provide a food benefit to Vermont families at this time when they are most economically challenged to provide for their children. This benefit will provide for the purchase of food during this time when families are likely to experience the dilemma of having to choose between providing school supplies and clothing or food for their children.

**Who will get the help?**

Approximately 18,000 low income families with 30,000 minor children will benefit from this effort. The size of each individual family's benefit will depend upon how much help our Vermont donor community can provide.

**What will they get? What is the benefit?**

This benefit will be provided to all families with minor children, who are eligible for Vermont's 3SQVT program, formerly food stamps, on September 1, 2010. The benefit will go to families on an electronic benefit card that they can use at grocery stores to purchase food in August. The size of the families' benefit depends upon the number of minor children in the household and the generosity of our donors.

**How can you help?**

Help Vermont leverage federal stimulus funds by pledging a **donation to the Vermont Community Foundation**. The donated funds cannot be federal funds or funds used for a federal match. The Vermont Community Foundation upon receiving the funds will grant the funds to the State of Vermont. For every \$1.00 that a donor provides, the state can draw down \$4.00 of stimulus federal funds to feed Vermont children. In addition, donors' cash donations toward this effort will bring federal stimulus funds to Vermonters to spend in Vermont grocery stores.

To help, please commit a donation to the Vermont Community Foundation on behalf of the Vermont Department for Children for the specific purpose of feeding Vermont children and fighting childhood hunger through the back to school food benefit.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**August 11, 2009**

**GOVERNOR PATERSON AND GEORGE SOROS ANNOUNCE BACK-TO-SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW YORK CHILDREN**

*Open Society Institute and State and Federal Governments Create \$175 Million Public-Private Partnership to Help Low-Income Families Prepare for the School Year*

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Governor David A. Paterson today announced a historic collaboration with George Soros and the Open Society Institute (OSI) that will provide one-time, \$200 grants to more than 800,000 children in low-income families across New York State to help purchase school supplies as they prepare to return to class in September. Families who receive public assistance or food stamps can access this one-time Back-To-School Supplement of \$200 per school-aged child (ages 3 through 17) starting today. The Governor was joined by Mr. Soros and other elected officials at P.S. 208 in New York City today to make the announcement.

OSI committed \$35 million from its Foundation to Promote Open Society to the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), which oversees programs for low-income families. That commitment triggered the availability of an additional \$140 million in federal funding through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) emergency contingency fund that was established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) earlier this year.

"This first-of-its-kind partnership in New York is an example of how the public and private sectors can work together to foster a brighter future for the low-income families of our State," Governor Paterson said. "These \$200 grants will provide thousands of families with a much needed financial boost so that they can better meet the needs of their children as they prepare to go back to school. This partnership is a continuation of my commitment to aggressively identifying opportunities to use economic stimulus funds to help our neediest New Yorkers and to bolster our State's economy."

Mr. Soros said: "Even in the toughest of economic times, getting ready for school is important. When I was a student right after World War II, I had no money. I received cash from charities and I remember how important that was to my education. Since then, I have been very fortunate, so I am happy I've been given the opportunity today to help others. I hope these funds will relieve some of the financial burden on

New York's families so their children can start the school year off with a measure of optimism and hope for the future."

New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said: "Over the past year in New York City, we've attacked the national recession by doing more than ever to connect New Yorkers to employment, job training and the critical financial supports they need. Governor Paterson and I agree that New York's brightest days are still ahead of us and we will continue to work hard for those in need. George Soros' generous gift - combined with federal funding - will not only provide welcome assistance as kids head back to school but will also pump money into our local economy at a time when we need it most."

The supplements will be placed in accounts for each eligible family that can be accessed with their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, which are normally used to access public assistance and food stamp benefits. Two-thirds of the eligible recipients of the back-to-school supplements are in food stamp-only households, and the majority of these households are low-income working families or families receiving unemployment benefits.

Families can use the money to buy their children books, pencils, pens, notebooks, calculators, backpacks, shoes, tutoring, school uniforms and other clothing and essential school items. Families should look to take advantage of discounts offered by retailers in the coming weeks before school starts. The \$175 million in Back-To-School Supplements will provide an economic boost to communities throughout the State as families purchase supplies, bolstering back-to-school retail sales.

Earlier this year, New York State became eligible for \$407 million in TANF contingency funds to help low-income families during unusually difficult economic times - in part due to increased enrollment in the State's Food Stamp Program, which now stands at an all-time high. The back-to-school initiative continues the State's effort to maximize its access to federal TANF funding and represents a nearly unprecedented public-private partnership in terms of the number of direct beneficiaries. Federal TANF emergency contingency funds are being used for the back-to-school supplements initiative, and use of these funds is limited to three categories of spending - non-recurring short-term benefits, subsidized employment, or basic assistance.

Families should also check the New York State Consumer Protection Board's "Stretch Your Dollar" tips at [www.consumer.state.ny.us/syde\\_page.htm](http://www.consumer.state.ny.us/syde_page.htm), to get ideas on how to

make the back-to-school funds buy more while spending less to help their children. Recipients' eligibility for public assistance, food stamps, child support and medical assistance will not be affected by receiving these one-time Back-To-School Supplements.

The announcement comes just one week after Governor Paterson announced the latest advancement in New York State's myBenefits website, so that individuals in Jefferson, Lewis and Madison Counties can apply directly for food stamps from any computer with Internet access, at any time convenient for them. An online hub, myBenefits was created to expand access to critical economic supports by creating a single Internet portal for New York State families and community partners to connect with benefits (i.e., public assistance, food stamps, Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus, etc.), services and work supports. More information can be found at <http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov>.

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*The following statements were provided in support of the back-to-school assistance program:*

U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer said: "This funding is a smart investment in the futures of our students. Each \$200 grant will provide access to much-needed resources and back-to-school supplies so that our students are prepared and ready to learn on their very first day of class."

U.S. Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand said: "Nothing is more important for our children and for the future of our State than a good education. I am humbled and proud to see leaders at all levels coming together to deliver the resources that our children need for school in these tough economic times. Together, we are working to arm the children of this State with the tools they need for a strong start to the new school year."

Congressman Charles Rangel said: "No matter where they live, every parent wants their kids to have the books and supplies they need to have a great start the school year. These grants will make a big difference in the lives of many families, allowing them to send their kids off with the tools they need not just to learn, but also to succeed. I want to thank Governor Paterson for his leadership and most of all George Soros for his generosity in partnering with the State in making great use of Recovery and Reinvestment funds from the federal

government.”

Congresswoman Yvette Clarke said: “As a Member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I believe that education is the gateway out of poverty. The collaboration between Governor Paterson, George Soros and the Open Society Institute is a tremendous step to ensuring that our children have access to the educational tools that they need. I am hopeful that through these grants, the children of Brooklyn, New York will have the opportunity to start off their school year with the confidence they need to excel.”

Congressman Gregory Meeks said: “To have the private sector and public sector come together for these Back-To-School Supplement grants is a major accomplishment. Providing parents the tools they need to facilitate a quality education for their children reinforces the importance of all segments of our society coming together to push student achievement. This kind of partnership must be nurtured and continued.”

Congressman Edolphus “Ed” Towns said: “I am grateful to Mr. Soros and his Open Society Institute for their generous contribution to help underserved students across our State. The funds will ensure that mothers and fathers can send their children back to school with the supplies they need to succeed. As a proud supporter of the Recovery Act, I believe this is further proof that stimulus dollars are reaching and supporting those who need them most.”

Senate President Malcolm A. Smith said: “As fall approaches, students and parents begin to anticipate and prepare for the upcoming school year. Unfortunately for many New Yorkers this can be a stressful time as back to school supplies can be expensive and out of reach for already stretched family budgets. Education is the foundation for the future of our state and its residents, and our students deserve to be prepared with the tools required to attain that education. I would like to thank the Open Society Institute for giving New York \$35 million that we will use to obtain matching federal dollars to ensure that our students can make the most of the quality education provided for them in this State.”

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said: “Especially during a time when more and more families are finding themselves in need, these funds will help ensure that children will have the resources necessary to return to school ready to learn. These grants, provided by a federal and private partnership, allow families to purchase needed supplies

and clothing to prepare students for September, while also stimulating local economies as families shop for these items."

Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Chair of the Senate Committee on Children and Families, said: "Having pen and paper and a school bag to carry books and homework are essential tools to a student's preparedness and academic success. This generous gift will make the world of difference to many deserving youth whose parents can't afford to buy them even the most basic school supplies."

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, said: "I join Governor Paterson in thanking George Soros and the Open Society Institute for the generous grant in support of education. Each September, the promise of a new school year is tempered for thousands of low income families who struggle to afford their children's back to school supplies. The OSI grant and the matching federal funds obtained by Governor Paterson will help bring the joy of learning back to those families."

Senator Daniel Squadron, Vice-Chair of the Senate Social Services Committee, said: "This partnership between State government and George Soros is an example of public life at its best -- and it shows how generous individuals and effective government can truly help those who need it most. Mr. Soros' generosity, combined with State government and federal stimulus dollars, will make a huge difference for thousands of families this school year. I am pleased to have pushed for this program in the State Senate and commend Governor Paterson for making it a reality."

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Education, said: "With the first day of school just around the corner, this program will help students start the year off on the right foot by helping to supply them with the school supplies needed to have a successful school year."

Assemblyman William Scarborough, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Children and Families, said: "This is a wonderful program. Children in all economic circumstances should have the ability and resources to succeed in school. These funds provide a unique opportunity for low income children to have those needs supplied and give them a boost in their education."

Westchester County Executive Andy Spano said: "Returning to school is an important time for every child. No child should have to go

without the tools they need to succeed in the classroom or feel badly because they can't afford new clothing on that special first day back to school. Thanks to Governor Paterson and George Soros, who remembers what it was like to go without, the families of more than 19,000 children in Westchester will have an extra \$200 to help provide these necessities."

New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein said: "A new school year can be overwhelming enough for families in good economic times. Thanks to this innovative public-private partnership, they won't have the extra burden of worrying about the cost of basic supplies and their children will have the tools they need to start the year off right."

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