

The Honorable Eliot Spitzer
Governor
State of New York
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Spitzer:

We are writing to ask you to take immediate action to reverse a Pataki-era welfare policy that denies federal disability benefits to over a thousand disabled children in low-income households that receive the AIDS emergency shelter allowance.

About 1100 New York families living on survival-level public assistance benefits lose approximately \$573 per month under this harsh policy.

Although the issue was under discussion during this year's budget talks, budget bills so far have not included language to change the policy and restore the benefits.

As advocates for people living with HIV/AIDS, people with additional or other disabilities, and for low-income New York families we are hopeful that your administration will work to improve a range of HIV/AIDS, anti-poverty and disability policies.

We've been encouraged by many of the steps you've taken in your first months in office, including initiatives to protect tenants in AIDS supportive housing and to restore proper budgeting for many households receiving state public assistance and federal SSI benefits.

But we are very concerned that the needs of these vulnerable families struggling with AIDS and disabled children have not yet been addressed.

We urge you to take the necessary steps now to change state policy on AIDS SSI invisibility and allow these families and children to receive the full amount of federal disability benefits to which they are entitled.

Yours very truly,

**SIGN ON BY SENDING AN EMAIL WITH NAME AND ORGANIZATION TO
KINK@HOUSINGWORKS.ORG**

List in formation

AIDS GROUPS

Action for a Better Community/Action Front Center

Bailey House

FACES NY (formerly Minority Task Force on AIDS)

Gay Men's Health Crisis

Housing Works

Latino Commission on AIDS

National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS

New York AIDS Coalition

New York City AIDS Housing Network

Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS

LEGAL SERVICES GROUPS

Empire Justice Center

The HIV Law Project

The Legal Aid Society

DISABILITY GROUPS

Center for Disability Rights

Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York (CIDNY)

New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services

New York State ADAPT

New York State Independent Living Council

HEALTH, ANTIPOVERTY & CHILDREN'S GROUPS

American Academy of Pediatrics District II NYS

Health and Welfare Council of Long Island