



## Why are Senate Republicans robbing poor, disabled children whose parents have AIDS?

### Senate Republicans should really learn to pick on someone their own size.

This year's Senate budget does not restore SSI "invisibility" for disabled children whose parents are living with HIV/AIDS. This budget bungle means that Senate Republicans are snatching money from the hands of defenseless tots in some 1,100 struggling New York families.

**What is SSI "invisibility"?** Normally, welfare budgeting policy would not include a child's SSI benefits in calculating welfare cash assistance for a household—the child remains "invisible" for budget calculation purposes. It's a sound concept: A child's disability benefits are intended to help families cope with the additional burden of caring for a disabled child and shouldn't reduce their monthly welfare assistance.

Housing Works has won numerous lawsuits—including a landmark Court of Appeals case—establishing the principle of SSI invisibility.

But just before he left office, Gov. George Pataki found time to change state law to circumvent the courts, viciously denying SSI invisibility to children in families who also receive the state's HIV emergency shelter allowance. That means disabled children whose parents have HIV and face housing instability are the *only* children in the state denied SSI invisibility—an unconscionable injustice that costs needy families a critical \$573 a month.

**It's an outrage that Senate Republicans are playing politics with the lives of sick children** in poor families already struggling HIV/AIDS. Governor Paterson and the Assembly both recognized the travesty of current state policy and restored SSI invisibility in their budgets. Senate Republicans should restore SSI invisibility—and go find someone else to pick on.

**Thank you Governor Paterson and New York State Assembly Members—you are doing the right thing by standing by disabled children and parents who have HIV/AIDS!**