



# Monroe County Legislature

**RACHEL BARNHART**

**Legislator – District 17**

PHONE: (585) 210-3246

E-MAIL: RACHEL@RACHBARNHART.COM

February 10, 2025

To The Honorable  
Monroe County Legislature  
39 West Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14614

**Re: Memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature to Invest in Families by Strengthening the Safety Net**

**Honorable Legislators:**

New York State families work hard but continue to struggle to make ends meet. In Rochester, for example, 40 percent of children live in poverty. We can—and must—make greater investments in families to promote stability and economic mobility across our state.

Several proposed bills currently under consideration would expand direct cash support, strengthen critical tax credits, and reduce barriers to public benefits. We urge support for the following legislation:

- **Increased Cash for Basic Needs and Utilities (A.106/S.1127):** Raises the cash and utilities portion of the allowance, which has not been increased since 2012.
- **Increased Cash Benefit for Homeless in Shelters (A.108/S.113):** Ensures people living in shelters receive a comparable monthly allowance to those not in shelters by increasing their cash grant.
- **Help Working Recipients Save More (A4317/S.182):** Allows public assistance recipients who have completed training and entered the workforce to earn up to 400% of the poverty line (an increase from 200%) for six months.
- **Mothers and Infant Lasting Change (MILC) Bill (S.2132/A.1597):** Provides income-eligible new parents, from the last three months of pregnancy through the first 18 months of a child's life, with cash assistance.

Taken together, these proposals would have a transformative impact on child well-being and help families become more economically secure. When families thrive, communities thrive—and our entire state grows stronger.

Sincerely,

**Rachel Barnhart**  
Legislator – District 17

**Susan Hughes-Smith**  
Legislator – District 14