

RMAPI 2025 Local Recommendations

(as of 1.30.25)



Housing

- *City: Explore avenues for rent stabilization and slowing rent increases
- *City and Towns: implement zoning changes that enable and support the development of multifamily housing, mixed use areas, and housing at all price points
- City: Move forward with a Public Utility study to better understand options for lowering utility burden.
- County: Contribute to a Public Utility study to better understand options for lowering utility burden
- City: Continue to implement the Housing Quality Task Force recommendations to ensure all Rochester residents have safe, quality housing
- City and County: use financing tools to encourage mixed income housing developments in all areas of the City and County
- City and County: Subsidize renovation of existing properties into high quality affordable and deeply affordable rental housing
- City and County: Increase funding for first-time homebuyers' programs and repair programs for low-income homeowners
- City and County: Subsidize construction of new housing for first-time homebuyers

Income/Benefit

- *City: Fund a continuation of the City's GBI Pilot into a permanent program
- County: Continue initiatives to streamline and provide community-based access to County-administered benefits

Criminalization/Exploitation & Predatory Practices

- City and County: Support the development of bank branches in underserved communities
- City and County: Ensure that policies and practices in the legal and public safety systems do not disproportionately harm low income and Black and Brown families and communities

Health Equity

- City and County: Continue to invest in, increase the capacity of, and track the effectiveness of the City's Person in Crisis (PIC) team and County's Forensic Intervention Team (FIT)
- County: Increase funding and support for peer-to-peer supports and teen mental health safe spaces

(* = Top Priority)

RMAPI 2025 State Recommendations

Housing



Vouchers/Subsidies

*Create a State Housing Voucher Program as recommended by the CPRAC or by enacting the Housing Access Voucher Program (A01704/S00072). Funding needed: \$250 million.

*Invest \$47 million for housing navigation services to increase voucher utilization rates and make the housing system easier to navigate for those with vouchers.

*In alignment with the CPRAC, increase the DHS Shelter Allowance to 108% of HUD Fair Market Rent through state legislative change or OTDA policy change so households receiving this allowance can access quality housing (2024 #: A05543/S2982).

Protect renters using a housing subsidy or voucher from discrimination (2024 #: S7923A).

Housing Development

- Target state resources towards building affordable housing in communities with inclusive zoning/land use policies.
- Subsidize renovation of existing properties into high quality affordable and deeply affordable rental housing.

Housing Access

- Fund landlord incentives to encourage renting to tenants with subsidies/vouchers.
- Pass Statewide Right to Counsel in Eviction Proceedings (2024 #: A1493 / S2721).

Homeownership

- Increase funding for first-time homebuyers' programs and repair programs for low-income homeowners.
- Create financing options for lower income households such as the NY State First Home Savings Program (2024 #: A06933 / S6574).
- Maintain/codify funding for the Homeowner Protection Program – \$40 million in funding and 2024 #: A7636/ S7297 to codify.
- Right to Inspection (2024 #: A8889)

Income & Benefits

Income/Wages

- *Upstate Parity and Minimum Wage Protection Act (A01625/S02627).
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (S02429).
- Progressive Income Tax (A1281/ S01622).

Benefits

- In alignment with CPRAC, propose changes to Public Assistance to remove the asset test and eliminate the use of durational sanctions to make it easier for New Yorkers to maintain receipt of benefits for which they are eligible (2024 # A03539 / S4519).
- Increase the “Basic Allowance” Grant amount by 100%, in alignment with CPRAC.
- More flexible income disregards and other efforts to address fiscal cliffs (2024 # A10155/S8374A).
- Increase New York State Supplement Program (SSP) benefits.
- Create and strengthen state supplement programs for federal benefits to decrease cliff effects.

Tax Credits & Cash Support

- *Support the Governor’s proposed expansion of the child tax credit – increasing the amount to \$1,000 for children under the age of 4, \$500 for children ages 4-16, and eliminating the phase-in, in alignment with CPRAC’s recommendation for the expansion of the Child Tax Credit to our lowest income families. Funding needed: \$3.2 billion.
- *Direct cash assistance for new parents through establishing the Baby Bucks Allowance (A1597/S2132) and/or through the Governor’s proposed New York State Birth Allowance for the Beginning Year (BABY Benefit).
- Working Families Tax Credit (A03474/S02082).
- EITC for Youth Workers (2024 #: A00477 / S6774).
- Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (2024 #: A01453 / S4873).
- Gate Money Bill (S6643A/ A00193).
- Transition Age Youth Bill (2024 #: S3102).

Food

- Support the Governor’s proposal for Universal School Meals.
- Create a State Food Benefit for Families with Children, No Noncitizen Restrictions (CPRAC recommendation).
- Pass the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program (A1318 / S665).

Criminilization/Exploitation & Predatory Practices

- *End Predatory Court Fees Act (2024 #: A4183 / S313).
- Prevent any rollbacks to existing bail reform laws.
- Prohibit bank fees for services that are rendered through an e-benefit card (2024 #: A8999B / S2601A).
- Marvin Mayfield Act/End Mandatory Minimum Sentencing (A01297 / S01209).
- Second Look Act (A1283 / S0158).
- Earned Time Act (A01085 / S00342).
- Ensuring Safe and Fair Traffic Enforcement / Ending pretextual and secondary stops (bill number TBD)

C hild Care

- *Increase rates for family, friend and neighbor (legally-exempt) child care providers to 75% of the family child care rate and to 85% for providers who are eligible for the enhanced rate.
- *Invest \$1.2 billion in child care workforce wages.
- Automatic Market Rate Increases (2024 #: A02019 / S3070).
- Eliminate Minimum Wage Requirements for child care subsidy eligibility (2024 #: A01303 / S4924).
- Eliminate Minimum Hour Requirements for child care subsidy eligibility (2024 #: A08878 / S8152).

Health Equity



Mental Health

- *Daniel's Law (S2398/A2210).
- Increase funding and support for peer-to-peer supports and teen mental health safe spaces.
- Invest in the Healer's Village Initiative to train existing mental health providers in culturally responsive approaches.
- Increase funding for School-Based Health Centers to include mental health services and enable Medicaid reimbursement for school-based services for all children.

Equitable access to health services

- Increase Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement rates for all health services, in particular: making 2024-25 Medicaid rate increases permanent, increasing New York State's Medicaid share, increasing the Medicaid rate for dentistry care, and increased rates for youth mental health services.
- Increase COLA rates.
- Social Work Workforce Act (S988/ A00701).

All of the recommendations on this list are important and in alignment with RMAPI's Policy Agenda. Recommendations marked with an asterisk (*) are a top priority and will be a major focus of RMAPI's advocacy efforts in 2025.

RMAPI 2025 Federal Recommendations

(as of 1.30.25)



Overall Priority:

Federal funding is vital for tens of thousands of households in Monroe County. Cuts to federal funding would devastate individuals and families, especially the most vulnerable, by removing essential support for food, shelter, and other basic needs. Many households are already on the brink and such cuts would further jeopardize their health and well-being. RMAPI strongly opposes and stands firm against any reductions to these critical services. The priorities below will be updated as the federal landscape evolves.

Housing

- Protect and maintain HUD funding for local housing authorities
- Protect and maintain federal investments in affordable housing development

Income & Benefits

- Protect and maintain SSI/SSDI at the federal level
- Protect and maintain WIC at the federal level
- Maintain and update SNAP benefit calculations to cover realistic food costs/budgets for households
- Protect and maintain federal funding for school meals
- Reestablish the Federal the Child Tax Credit

Criminalization/Exploitation & Predatory Practices

- Eradicate punitive policies and practices in legal and public systems that disproportionately harm low-income and Black and Brown families and communities
- Support efforts to limit banks charging overdraft fees

Child Care

- Create a Permanent Child Care Fund to support increased wages for the child care workforce
- Protect and maintain Head Start funding and Child Care block grants

Health Equity

- Create loan forgiveness programs for mental health clinicians serving children
- Protect and maintain Medicaid and Medicare coverage



RMAPI 2025 New York State Budget Priorities

Recommendation 1: Expand the Empire State Child Tax Credit

Expand the Empire State Child Tax Credit

RMAPI supports the Governor's proposed expansion of the child tax credit – increasing the amount to \$1,000 for children under the age of 4, \$500 for children ages 4-16, and eliminating the phase-in so that the lowest income families in our state receive the full benefit. This aligns with the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council's (CPRAC) recommendation for the expansion of the Child Tax Credit to our lowest income families – an ask of \$3.2 billion.

Impact: 2.75 million children

Recommendation 2: Increase Affordable Housing Options for Low-Income Renters

Create a State Housing Voucher Program

Funding needed: \$250 million

- RMAPI calls for the creation and funding of a State Housing Voucher Program – as recommended by the CPRAC or by enacting the Housing Access Voucher Program (A01704/S00072), a new state-funded and administered housing voucher to serve income-eligible renting households (50% AMI) not currently receiving HCVs or other rental vouchers.
- In addition, RMAPI supports state funding of \$47 million for housing navigation services and related supports to increase voucher utilization rates and make the housing system easier to navigate for those with vouchers.

Raise the DHS Shelter Allowance

- In alignment with the CPRAC, RMAPI supports increasing the DHS Shelter Allowance to 108% of HUD Fair Market Rent through state legislative change or OTDA policy change so that households receiving this allowance can access quality housing. This is similar to 2023-24 bill A05543/S2982.

Recommendation 3: Increase Direct Cash Assistance

Increase Direct Cash Assistance for New Parents

Funding needed: \$200 million+

RMAPI supports efforts to get direct cash assistance to new parents. This could be through establishing the Baby Bucks Allowance (A1597/S2132) a pilot program designed to provide financial support to low-income families during the last three months of pregnancy and the first 18 months of a child's life) and/or through the Governor's proposed New York State Birth Allowance for the Beginning Year (BABY Benefit, providing \$100 per month during pregnancy and an additional \$1,200 payment at birth).



RMAPI 2025 New York State Budget Priorities

Recommendation 4: Advance Living Wages Statewide

Advance Living Wages Statewide

RMAPI supports the Upstate Parity and Minimum Wage Protection Act (A01625/S02627), which would close the minimum wage disparity upstate New Yorkers face. The bill would require workers in upstate areas to be paid \$16 an hour by the start of 2025, and \$17 an hour by Jan. 1, 2026.

Recommendation 5: Eliminate Exploitative Financial Practices

Pass the End Predatory Court Fees Act

RMAPI supports the End Predatory Court Fees Act (23-24 bill A4183/S313) which would eliminate the mandatory surcharge and other fees that attach to traffic tickets and criminal convictions, eliminate probation fees, end mandatory minimum fines and require judges to consider a person's economic circumstances when setting fine amounts, and abolish the practice of incarcerating people for inability to pay fines or fees and prohibits commissary garnishment to pay for court debt.

Recommendation 6: Invest in More Flexible and Affordable Child Care

Increase the Availability of Flexible Child Care

Funding needed: \$50 million

- RMAPI supports raising compensation for child care providers and increasing access to flexible child care by increasing rates for family, friend and neighbor (legally-exempt) child care providers to 75% of the family child care rate and to 85% for providers who are eligible for the enhanced rate.

Improve Compensation for the Child Care Workforce

Funding needed: \$1.2 billion

- RMAPI supports addressing the shortage of family access to affordable child care by improving compensation and supporting education and training for the provider workforce. This critical funding would increase the salary of the NYS child care workforce by \$12,000.

Recommendation 7: Prioritize Community-Based Solutions to Mental Health Crises

Fully Implement Daniel's Law

RMAPI supports the full implementation of Daniel's Law (S2398/A2210), which will invest in mental health professionals and peer support specialists to respond to mental health emergencies offering compassionate, therapeutic treatment and care.

For more information: contact Aqua Porter, aqua.porter@rmapiny.org