Please print your letter on your letterhead

June 17, 2020

**INSERT ELECTED OFFICIAL CONTACT INFORMATION HERE:**

Dear (Name of elected official),

My name is *[[your name]]* from *[[your town]]* and I represent *[[your business/organization]]*. I care about youth employment issues in New York State therefore, I am calling on you to support the release of funding of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families set aside for Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) presently held for review by the NYS Dept. of Budget. The program is scheduled to start at the beginning of July and without those funds, thousands of at-risk youth will lose employment opportunities.

SYEP provides an important platform to introduce youth into the workforce, helping them acquire skills that can be used to improve school performance and become responsible adults. Last February, Governor Cumo said "Summer Youth Employment Program gives young people the chance to earn a paycheck while building valuable skills that will have a positive impact well into adulthood. We are growing this program because it's a smart investment in the next generation of our workforce that will pay dividends for all New Yorkers."

Participating students come from low-income families and early training and employment has shown a positive effect on their lives. A study from the Center for Human Services Research found that SYEP participants were 66% more likely to graduate from high school than non-participants. Other studies show youth who participate in summer employment opportunities get better grades and exam scores when they return to school in the fall. Having youth participate in the SYEP has also shown to decrease incarceration among youth in our communities.

The program is slated to start in early July so I urge you to contact the Dept. of Budget and have them release the $44 million in federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) set aside to create summer jobs for nearly 19,000 low income young adults, at a time of record unemployment. The North Country’s programs are ready to engage young adults in real work experience, right now! This program has operated for decades, and if it doesn't run this summer New York is making the choice to leave young adults behind as part of its recovery.

Simply put, work works when it comes to better outcomes for our youth.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Name, Position