



What is SOMOS, and why is SOMOS important to attend from an advocacy standpoint?

SOMOS is a 501c3 and its mission is to unite the Latino community and raise awareness; advocate and elevate social consciousness on public policy in collaboration with the New York State Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican & Hispanic Task Force; and to ensure upward mobility of Latino youth through educational empowerment, mentoring programs and scholarships. It has had great success in building a coalition in the Assembly and Council.

SOMOS' target audience overlaps largely with our workers as over 55% of human services workers are brown and black women of color in NYC. This task force aims to work in the best interest of our overlapping constituencies; advocating to them directly on the issues of human services workers is an opportunity that needs to be seized to continue the push for our agenda.

SOMOS works in conjunction with the New York State Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican & Hispanic Task Force which is chaired by Assemblywoman Maritza Davila. She works hand-in-hand with Hispanic legislators to spearhead issues such as immigration reform, inadequate Census representation, and criminal justice reform. Together, Somos, Inc. and the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force collaborate to organize the largest gathering of Hispanic civic and political leaders in the Empire State.

Which elected officials are a part of SOMOS and why are they essential to building our power?

HSC is working to build our power at the state level. Most of these legislators are representatives of your employees and the communities you provide services in, and we should engage them in advocating for the human services sector and our #JustPay agenda. Many of the elected officials that attend are not of Hispanic descent but represent Hispanic constituencies. This gives Executive Directors, Lobbyists, Advocates, and community partners an easier path to connecting deeper with legislators about our policy agenda.

Assemblymembers that are a part of the Puerto Rican & Hispanic Task Force

Chair Maritza Davila D53 – (Brooklyn)
Speaker Carl E. Heastie D83 – (Bronx)
AM Jeffrion Aubry D35 – (Queens)
AM Brian Barnwell D30 – (Queens)
AM Didi Barrett D106 – (outside of NYC)
AM Michael Benedetto D82 – (Bronx)
AM Kenny Burgos D85 – (Bronx)
AM Marianne Buttenschon D119 – (outside of NYC)
AM Vivian E. Cook D32 – (Queens)
AM Catalina Cruz D39 – (Queens)
AM Inez E. Dickens D70 – (Manhattan)
AM Erik M. Dilan D54 – (Brooklyn)
AM Edward Gibbs D68 – (Manhattan)
AM Chantel Jackson D79 – (Bronx)
AM Latoya Joyner D77 – (Bronx)
AM Ron Kim D40 – (Queens)
AM Aileen Gunther D100 – (outside of NYC)
AM Nathalia Fernandez D80 – (Bronx)
AM Jessica Gonzalez Rojas D34 – (Queens)
AM Mike Lawler D51 – (Brooklyn)
AM Steven Otis D91 – (outside of NYC)
AM J. Gary Pretlow D89 – (outside of NYC)
AM Zohran K. Mamdani D36 – (Queens)
AM Catherine Nolan D37 – (Queens)

AM Amy Paulin D88 – (outside of NYC)
AM Phil Ramos D6 – (outside of NYC)
AM Demond Meeks D137 – (outside of NYC)
AM Daniel J. O'Donnell D69 – (Manhattan)
AM Stacey Pheffer Amato D23 – (Queens)
AM Karines Reyes D87 – (Bronx)
AM Jonathan Rivera D149 – (outside of NYC)
AM Rebecca A. Seawright D76 – (Manhattan)
AM Steve Stern D10 – (outside of NYC)
AM Jose Rivera D78 – (Bronx)
AM Amanda Septimo D84 – (Bronx)
AM Yudelka Tapia D86 – (Bronx)
AM Nily Rozic D25 – (Queens)
AM Michaelle C. Solages D22 – (outside of NYC)
AM Al Taylor D71 – (Manhattan)
AM Fred W. Thiele, Jr. D1 – (outside of NYC)
AM Jaime R. William D59 – (Brooklyn)
AM Latrice Walker D55 – (Brooklyn)
AM Kenneth Zebrowski D96 – (outside of NYC)
AM David I. Weprin D24 – (Queens)
AM Stefani Zinerman D56 – (Brooklyn)

Senators that are a part of the Puerto Rican & Hispanic Task Force

Sen. Jessica Ramos D13 – (Queens)
Sen. Julia Salazar D18 – (Brooklyn/Queens)
Sen. Gustavo Rivera D33 – (Bronx)

Sen. Luis R. Sepulveda D32 – (Bronx)
Sen. Jose Serrano D29 – (Bronx & Manhattan)

What are HSC's goals at SOMOS and how can members help move that agenda forward?

HSC is fighting to end government-sanctioned poverty wages and have New York finally pay human services workers equitable wages by adopting and funding the following core reforms:

- Automatic annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 8.5%
- Living wage floor of no less than \$21 an hour
- Comprehensive wage/benefit schedule comparable to government employees in the same field

Human Services Sector's Priorities at the City Level

- Automatic annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 8.5%

- Living wage floor of no less than \$21 an hour.
- Comprehensive wage/benefit schedule comparable to government employees in the same field

Talking points for City

Highlight the struggles your team should not be facing but are because of this government-sanctioned poverty wage.

- The City is taking advantage of the love my workers have for their jobs by using taxpayer dollars to fund poverty-level wages.
- Our workers juggle high caseloads, significant administrative work, and are responsible for carrying emotional burdens associated with working closely with clients in need. They should at least be paid equitably for the critical work that we do.

Human Services Sector's Priorities at the State Level

- Automatic annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 8.5%.
- Supporting the Wage floor bill introduced by AM Joyner and Sen. Ramos
- Comprehensive wage/benefit schedule comparable to government employees in the same field

Talking Points for State

Highlight the struggles your team should not be facing but are because of this government-sanctioned poverty wage

- A wage floor is crucial to address the pay disparities for workers who are 70% women and 75% people of color.
- Our workers need a prevailing wage because one out of every four human services workers have a family income that put them in near poverty.
- Our workers are highly educated, with many of them having a master's degree or better but are paid less than similarly educated public or private sector workers.

Procurement Advocacy

Chronic delays in contract payments force providers to undertake costly borrowing to make payroll and rents, often accruing interest not covered by government contracts. Government contracts and philanthropic grants rarely cover operating costs and payment is often late and unpredictable, resulting in cash flow obstacles and chronic underfunding. The lack of permanent commitment to sufficient indirect funding, inadequate payment of services, and delayed procurement processes prevents providers from cultivating a strong infrastructure. The procurement system must be transformed through these overarching changes to prioritize meaningful outcomes for New Yorkers.

Talking points on Procurement

- Ensure that indirect funding is baselined as standard agency funding so that providers can claim their full indirect costs at the City and State level.

- Require contracting agencies to go through a model budget process to justify the funding in RFPs, assess what the actual costs are, and pay providers for the full cost of services.
- Include cost escalators within fixed costs of contracts.
- Ensure prompt contract registration and payment by legislating penalties for failure to pay on time at the City level and strengthening the State's rule on prompt payment.