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For Immediate Release

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Education Advocates Respond to Governor's Education Budget Veto

Statement of Billy Easton, Executive Director, Alliance for Quality Education:

“As a senator, David Paterson was a champion of public education, but as governor he has repeatedly sought to slash school funding. If his veto stands, David Paterson will leave a legacy as an anti-education governor. The Legislature's proposed education budget would restore a portion of the governors \$1.4 billion cut and would mean fewer students will lose teachers and programs, but the Governor's veto threatens to take every penny possible from our school children.

In 2010, the Assembly has been the primary force standing up for all of our public school children and insisting that any restorations in school aid be available for educating students. The Senate has been a house divided, some Senators supported restoring some of the cuts to all of our classrooms, others specifically sought to block these funds from reaching the classroom. The result was the Legislature's compromise that restores a percentage of teachers and programs that have been cut in high need districts while blocking these funds from reaching classrooms in other districts. In high needs school districts across the state this compromise budget offers a critical margin of protection to the quality of education. The Governor's veto, if it stands, will hurt the neediest students in the state the most.”

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Statement of Geri D. Palast, Executive Director, Campaign for Fiscal Equity

“Governor Paterson’s veto of the Legislature’s effort to prioritize modest school aid restorations as well as accommodate the demand for property tax relief is an abandonment of the state’s constitutional obligation to provide a sound basic education for every public school student in New York. The Assembly took the lead in restoring school aid. The compromise on property tax relief with the Senate does ensure that high needs districts can use these funds to restore school cuts, however it compels average and low need districts to use these funds for property tax relief, and denies these districts the option to restore school aid. While we are deeply disturbed with this outcome, the Legislature did put forward an alternative that makes tough choices while working to maintain one of the core purposes of state government—educating our children so that they help themselves as well as our nation compete in the global economy and participate as knowledgeable actors in civil society. The Assembly and the Senate proposed to balance the needs of children and property tax payers with the need to raise revenues. The Governor’s wholesale rejection of this approach, thus proceeding with deep school cuts and a property tax cap that will starve schools long term, must be rejected in turn. We urge the Assembly and Senate to override the veto and to ensure that educating children is not sacrificed on the altar of election year politics.”

Statement of Glynda C. Carr, Executive Director of Education Voters

"Governor Paterson chose to veto the education bill and jeopardize the educational future of millions of school children in this state. The economic investment that quality education provides ultimately stabilizes the future of our communities and our state. It is very telling that a former champion for the Campaign for Fiscal Equity court case and its parity is now a loser in the race to ensure a better life for the future of the youngest New Yorkers.”

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