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For Immediate Release:

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The Campaign for Fiscal Equity and the Alliance for Quality Education Response to the 2008 State of the State

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

"In 2007 Governor Spitzer finally broke the Albany gridlock on school funding reform with a multi-year commitment to increase basic classroom operating aid, also known as foundation aid, by \$5.5 billion statewide over four years. The Governor and the legislature concluded that the second installment requires a \$1.24 billion foundation aid increase, including \$530 million for New York City, this year in order to meet the state's constitutional obligation to educate every child. Today the Governor has reasserted his commitment to accountability and investment through the Contracts for Excellence thus laying the groundwork for phasing in his year two commitment to full funding for these Contracts."

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

"Multi-year education reform was the signature accomplishment of year one for Governor Spitzer; his assertion today that investment plus accountability equals excellence is the right equation. We need both the accountability to ensure results for our students and the investment to make accountability meaningful. Last year the Governor and the legislature determined that in 2008 our school children will need a \$1.24 billion increase in foundation aid in order for his school accountability initiative to succeed. Under the Contract for Excellence, \$1.24 billion in new foundation aid is the increase needed this year to fulfill New York State's part of the bargain. Foundation aid is the basic classroom operating aid that makes school reform possible."

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