

How State and Local Advocates Stopped Child Care Cutbacks and Achieved Successes

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4 MS. BLANK: It's Helen Blank,
5 and I'm here with Hannah Matthews at CLASP, along with
6 a great team of advocates from the East, the West, and
7 in the middle of the country. We're so glad that you
8 could all join us. We have Kim Johnson, who is a
9 Public Policy Manager at the California Resource and
10 Referral Network; Scott Moore, Senior Policy Advisor at
11 Preschool California; Christine Robinson, the Director
12 of Public Policy and Advocacy at Illinois Action for
13 Children; Sheila Hansen, Policy Director at the Child
14 and Family Policy Center in Des Moines, Iowa; Cynthia
15 Rice, Senior Policy Analyst at the Association for
16 Children of New Jersey; and Betty Holcomb, Policy
17 Director at Center for Children's Initiatives in New
18 York.

19 As Amy said, we'll have a transcript as well
20 as a recording, and we've gotten some very, very helpful
21 material from all of our participants. Those will be

1 up on the National Women's Law Center's website and on
2 CLASP, www.nwlc.org and www.clasp.org.

3 So let's get started. We're going to
4 ask each one of you to describe the cuts proposed or the
5 improvements that you sought. We'll start with Kim and Scott.

6 MS. JOHNSON: This is Kim. Coming into this
7 budget cycle, the field of child care and early
8 education, in California, had received a
9 disproportionate cut of nearly \$1 billion over the last
10 three years, which was equivalent to nearly 115,000
11 child care spaces that had been lost. The
12 Governor and the legislature were working to close a
13 \$15.7 billion deficit this year, which included an
14 ongoing structural deficit of \$8 billion a year.
15 Advocates came in knowing that there may be some cuts,
16 but tried to minimize those with the disproportionate
17 cuts that happened in the past.

18 The Governor's January budget proposal
19 included major policy changes to the child care and early

1 learning infrastructure, which if passed, would have
2 resulted in a loss of \$500 million and over 60,000
3 children losing services. The proposal included
4 reductions to the income eligibility thresholds for
5 families, dramatic cuts to provider reimbursement
6 rates and increases to work restrictions and requirements
7 for families. Scott, I'll turn it over to you to discuss the
8 restructuring piece.

9 MR. MOORE: Thank you, Kim. On top of
10 those dramatic cuts to funds and numbers of children
11 served, Governor Brown also proposed restructuring, or
12 realigning, all of, or most of child care and
13 development, essentially shifting about \$700-800
14 million of funding from the Department of Education
15 over to the Department of Social Services, and then
16 through them, to County Welfare agencies. This
17 included both the child care voucher programs for our
18 CalWORKs, as well as our alternative payment programs
19 and our full-day state preschool and general child
20 care programs for school-age children and for infants and
21 toddlers.

22 This would have been devastating --

1 essentially wiping out our early learning system, as we
2 know it, for those children in our general child care
3 and state preschool programs. We would have lost all
4 of our quality standards that are associated with those
5 programs. Essentially they would have been given as
6 vouchers to County Welfare agencies, but there wasn't
7 a guarantee that it would stay in child care.
8 That would have impacted another 80,000 children in
9 total, that are currently getting either full-day
10 preschool, or general child care infant toddler
11 services, or school age services -- and, I might add,
12 for no savings. In fact, it even costs a little bit of
13 money in the budget year for implementation purposes.

14 What we faced, in terms of Governor Brown's
15 proposal, that came out in January, was just a wholesale
16 elimination of our early care and education system.
17 It was, by far, the largest threat that many of us,
18 including those of us who have been in the field for
19 10, 20, 30, 40 years, have ever seen. As Kim pointed
20 out, this was on top of already sustaining major, major
21 cuts, billion- dollar cuts, 100,000 children since
22 2008. It was, by far, an Armageddon-ish type proposal.

2 MS. BLANK: Scott?

3 MR. MOORE: Yes.

4 MS. BLANK: I have to cut you off in a
5 second.

6 MR. MOORE: Okay. I was just going to
7 add, the Governor also proposed to eliminate a new
8 grade that was established by law in 2010, called
9 Transitional Kindergarten. This was a proposal that
10 became law, where we took all the 4-year-olds that were
11 currently going to our traditional kindergarten,
12 125,000 of them a year, and created a new grade, that
13 allowed for more developmentally-appropriate
14 instruction for those children before they entered
15 kindergarten. That was also part of the proposal
16 for elimination.

17 MS. BLANK: Thanks. Christine, what happened
18 in Illinois?

19 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. So in Illinois, the
20 budget cycle begins with the Governor's proposal,
21 typically in February, and despite several public
22 statements about his belief in the importance of early

1 learning and his commitment to strengthening the state
2 economy, the Governor's Proposed Budget for FY13
3 included a significant cut to the child care assistance
4 program. The cut would have amounted to about \$85
5 million in reduced services to child care, and this cut
6 would have been implemented by the Department of Human
7 Services through dramatic increases in parent
8 copayments, including a 350% increase for the lowest
9 income families. It would have lowered income
10 guidelines to enter the CCAP program from 185% of
11 poverty to 150% of poverty. It would have eliminated
12 planned rate increases for center- based child care
13 providers, cuts to quality, and program changes that
14 would have minimized flexibility for families and that
15 were punitive to providers.

16 The increase in parent copayments was the
17 most significant, and it would have had a drastic
18 impact on children's ability to stay in the program and
19 parents' ability to keep working. Under this
20 introduced budget, families would have seen their
21 copays go up by an average of 52%, but the increases
22 were actually greatest for the lowest income families.

1 For example, under the proposal, a family of three,
2 making just less than \$1,000 a month, would have seen
3 about a 250% increase to their copayment; whereas a
4 family of four, at the top of the eligibility
5 guideline, making about \$3,500 a month, would have seen
6 an increase of about 20%.

7 MS. BLANK: Thanks, Christine.
8 Sheila? You had a positive change.

9 MS. HANSEN: Yes. We did have something
10 positive, and I feel kind of bad talking about this.
11 We actually had a \$1 billion surplus this
12 year, which I'm sure many states would have loved to
13 have had. But we also faced cuts, because we had a
14 Republican House that basically wanted to go home when
15 session was over and say we cut everything and saved a
16 ton of money. So we were facing a huge cut in child
17 care, which would have resulted in a waiting list, for
18 the first time in many years, in May of this year.
19 We decided to ask for something more and
20 even though we were facing this waiting
21 list challenge, we decided to go and ask for a provider
22 rate increase. We brought together a

1 coalition before the session even started. We wanted
2 to get everybody on the same page, because we have too
3 many different partners, who are out there asking and
4 advocating for different parts of the child care
5 system. So what we said is, "We need to all agree on
6 one thing that we can get, and not go off on something
7 else." Even though we acknowledge that all parts of
8 the system need improvement, the more we are
9 fragmented, the more legislators just throw their
10 hands up in the air, and go, "You guys don't know what
11 you want. We're not going to give you anything."

12 We put together what we called a Five-Year
13 Plan with the coalition -- many of them signed on --
14 and presented that to legislatures before the session
15 even started, and got it out to stakeholders and asked
16 for a 6% provider rate increase. To make a really long story
17 short, we ended up with a 2% provider rate increase, and we
18 received adequate funding for child care. I think this
19 document had a lot to do with it. We were all on the
20 same page. We all decided that it was a priority to
21 go after provider rate increases.

1 One other document that we put together
2 with the Iowa Association for the Education
3 of Young Children was a survey of providers. We did a
4 sampling and we asked them how much money they were
5 actually losing. These are center providers. We're
6 doing home providers in the coming year. How much they
7 were losing by taking state assistance. It was
8 remarkable. We did it throughout the state and
9 highlighted key areas in legislative districts. Some
10 would come back, that had \$45,000 a year in losses;
11 \$220,000 a year; \$84,000 a year. We presented that
12 to legislatures, and said, "What other business do we
13 ask to do this?" We made it very real to them;
14 presented it on a map of Iowa and highlighted those
15 areas.

16 MS. BLANK: Thanks, Sheila. Cynthia,
17 you were also seeking to do something positive.

18 MS. RICE: New Jersey's 2013 budget, the
19 initial proposal included a \$42 million total reduction
20 in child care programs. That would be a 21% decrease
21 in child care funds since 2010. Of that amount, about

1 \$10.3 million was to be reduced in our voucher child
2 care program, known as New Jersey Cares For Kids. The
3 problem was that while these reductions continued over
4 the last three years, the child care waiting list had
5 increased by 250% over the same time period, clearly
6 reflecting our economic downturn.

7 In 2010, the child care waiting list was at
8 3,000. In March, 2012, the state, which was reporting
9 it at 10,500. My organization, Advocates for Children
10 of New Jersey, surveyed all our resource and referral
11 agencies, because we thought the number would be
12 higher. The R&R's actually self-reported the number as
13 over 13,000 children.

14 We advocated on several issues during the
15 budget cycle. ACNJ saw that this issue had some legs,
16 because even though our state continues to feel the
17 impact of the recession, this continued decrease in
18 funding for vouchers and the huge increase in the
19 waiting list number clearly was a bad budgetary
20 decision. This was why we focused on that.

21 MS. BLANK: Thanks, Cynthia. Betty, tell us about
22 New York City.

1 MS. HOLCOMB: New York City is unusual, I
2 think. We have a very large budget, high numbers of
3 children and a really strong commitment from our local
4 officials to child care. The city puts in \$275
5 million and that's the biggest contribution besides the
6 Federal money. We have had a two-year campaign
7 and we've thought about it, in terms of numbers of
8 children that were going to lose services, and that's
9 the way we've messaged it.

10 The year before this one, in the City Budget,
11 Mayor Bloomberg was going to cut 17,000 child care subsidies -
12 17,000 children would lose services, so we formed the
13 Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care. We managed to
14 win \$80 million in restoration funds and the Administration
15 figured out a way to say that they were restoring all those
16 children after that campaign.

17 This year, in the budget; however, we got
18 played a bit against after school services in the way
19 the restorations were made and we joined with
20 after school advocates. We were facing a much bigger
21 cut. We were going to lose services for 47,000
22 children and about \$170 million in the budget to

1 support those services. At the end, we formed a new
2 broader campaign. We called it the Campaign For
3 Children, and we won a restoration of \$150 million and
4 pretty much restored services for something along the
5 order of 47,000 children. As everybody on this call
6 knows, when you get to the details, it gets more
7 complicated. But that's the basic story.

8 I think the only other thing I would add is
9 that we're very concerned in the city about
10 turning our child care system, which has a long
11 tradition of serving low income working parents, into a
12 system that only serves families on public assistance,
13 and that that would be the only route to getting a
14 subsidy. So in our campaign, we worried a lot about
15 that. Our eligibility aspiration is to serve families
16 up to 275% of poverty. I think the reality of that is
17 that we may have protected up to 200% of poverty for
18 some families.

19 MS. BLANK: Thanks, Betty. Some of you have
20 answered some of these questions already. If you have,
21 we won't repeat. Let's start with Kim and Scott. Kim,
22 what were some of the effective strategies you used to

1 fight the cuts or win the additional funding?

2 MS. JOHNSON: Sure. At the end of the
3 day, in California, there was an estimated block of
4 about 26,000 spaces and \$140 million in direct cuts in
5 child care and development services. The major
6 policy changes and restructuring proposals were
7 defeated. A big part of how we were able to get there
8 included our ability to generate strong data analysis and
9 impact information; we utilized fact sheets that were
10 very simplistic and succinct, that talked about
11 the impact of the cuts to children and families,
12 as well as providers and the infrastructure
13 of the program. We also had, as I heard, Shelia saying,
14 in Iowa too, a lot of unified messaging. Our statewide
15 organizations and partners were able to come together to
16 develop joint strategies and messaging, and they were
17 able to share those broadly with families that would be
18 impacted, as well as policymakers.

19 We also did a lot of action alerts and e-mail
20 campaigns. There were rallies that were held, where
21 some of our legislative champions were able to
22 encourage advocates to keep up the good fight. We had

1 campaigns via email, phone and letters, directly
2 targeted at some of the key legislators and the
3 Governor as well. Scott will talk a little about the
4 media and social networking efforts as well.

5 MR. MOORE: Thanks, Kim. Yes. Those
6 are all critical strategies and on top of that we worked to
7 engage the media in some of the issues that were
8 on the table. If you look at all of the various cuts
9 that were being proposed, we probably had 600+ media
10 articles, 700 or so in total, during that six-month
11 period. So that certainly put a lot of outside
12 pressure on the proposal. We also, I think, in the end,
13 as Kim mentioned, were very fortunate to have some very
14 strong champions in the legislature that were able to
15 hold the line. Advocates worked very closely with
16 those leaders and their staff and we were able to fend
17 off most of the proposals.

18 MS. BLANK: That's great. Christine? What
19 do you think were some of the most effective strategies
20 you used to fight the cuts?

21 MS. ROBINSON: We used a combination of
22 things. We had a couple of challenges that were

1 happening at the same time. We were fighting for our
2 FY13 Budget and then we were also dealing with the
3 crisis with our existing fiscal year budget. In May,
4 the Department of Human Services notified providers
5 that they had run out of funding for child care. The
6 providers were going to be facing a significant payment
7 delay. While that was a crisis, it also gave us a
8 really good organizing opportunity to mobilize our
9 base, and that was a big part of our strategy.

10 Combined with that, it was really the
11 relationships that we've developed over the years with
12 key staff, and the Governor's Office, and DHS. So we
13 had a sort of early warning system, where we were able
14 to activate our membership and bring a level of
15 attention to child care that the general assembly just
16 couldn't ignore. We also used media really effectively
17 this session. I think we got more press during the
18 FY12 crisis, with the payment delays, then we've ever
19 had before. We worked really hard to nuance our
20 messaging.

21 So while we still speak to legislators and
22 staffers about the impact of quality of early care and

1 child care education on children, we focused, this
2 year, on the economic impact angle. So we published a
3 Policy Brief that gives more of a macro look at how the
4 early care and education industry provides substantial
5 economic benefits to the state and its businesses. You
6 can get a copy of that, following this call.

7 Then we also launched a campaign that we
8 called Child Care Works. This campaign gave providers,
9 or members, a really tangible way to demonstrate the
10 individual impact that they have on their local
11 economy. So part of that strategy was about reframing
12 the public perception of child care from a consumer of
13 public resources, to really being a contributor to the
14 state's economy. But above all, it really was our
15 grassroots membership and their relationships with
16 legislators that was the most critical for us.

17 MS. BLANK: Thanks. Sheila, you talked about
18 the reports. Is there anything else, in terms of
19 effective strategies?

20 MS. HANSEN: I don't think so. I think
21 everybody else touched on it. We had, also, a
22 legislator that was key, who was -- it was about

1 timing. He was really into health care during the last two
2 years. Because of health care -- everyone was waiting for
3 the Affordable Care Act. He had some time on his
4 hands. So we told him child care would be something he
5 should be interested in. So that also helped us.

6 MS. BLANK: Cynthia?

7 MS. RICE: In New Jersey, we did our
8 traditional budget pieces. You know, our Children's
9 Budget Brief; our broad and individual Fact Sheets;
10 Action Alerts, all what we traditionally do. But what
11 we did differently this time, was I think, former Speaker
12 Tip O'Neill would be very proud of us. Because we took
13 heed in his famous saying, "that all politics is
14 local." We went to each of our R&R's. I think it's
15 because frankly, we have a good relationship with them
16 and they trust us. We asked them for their waiting
17 list numbers. What we did was, after we got them, we
18 then grouped the numbers by legislative districts. I
19 have to tell you that the numbers told a very
20 compelling story.

21 We then looked at the waiting list numbers of
22 the members of the budget, of our two House Budget

1 Committees -- our Assembly and our Senate. Before the
2 Commissioner of Human Services was to testify about her
3 budget, we contacted several members, whose waiting
4 list numbers were very high, and forwarded the numbers,
5 and asked them to ask her why she was advocating for a
6 decrease in funding when the total number of eligible
7 children on the waiting list had increased by 250% and
8 then why, in their legislative district, the numbers
9 were so high.

10 As an aside, I have to tell you that the
11 legislatures were very shocked by their local numbers.
12 It was a good example of how advocacy always needs to
13 provide the gray. A number on its own was just a
14 number, but they were able to bring the problem down to
15 ultimately what seemed to matter to the legislators,
16 the constituents with whom they served. They were
17 tough on the Commissioner. Every legislator -- all of
18 our legislators then got a piggybank that said, "Make
19 it a Jersey comeback for kids" -- because this is what
20 Governor Christie was saying, that this was a New
21 Jersey comeback. On the piggybanks, we tied cards on
22 them with the waiting list numbers for each legislator

1 and the legislative district.

2 We also worked with the R&R's to identify
3 families who were on the waiting list. After speaking
4 to them, we tried to connect them with various media
5 outlets, including our state's main cable news
6 networks, our newspapers. Our Executive Director did
7 an Op-Ed that was -- I know Helen has copies of it --
8 that was incredibly moving, using one mother's story,
9 to tell why this is such an issue. There was TV
10 coverage. Every time something came out, we sent the
11 links to our legislators, to kind of keep the pressure
12 on them.

13 We ultimately went to two Democrats and asked
14 them, one in the Assembly and in the Senate, each of
15 which had very high waiting list numbers, and asked
16 them to sponsor a \$5 million budget resolution to
17 reduce the waiting lists. We also then went to two
18 moderate Republicans with high numbers and asked them
19 the same.

20 Ultimately, it was the Democrats who
21 sponsored a \$4 million budget resolution. But in our
22 state's current political climate, it wouldn't have

1 been passed without kind of the behind the scenes
2 leadership of the Republican legislators.

3 In the meantime, the Department of Human
4 Services, in May, told the resource and referral
5 agencies that they were to move the waiting lists,
6 start reducing them, and that by 4,100 children; and
7 that they would use existing funds from the 2012 budget
8 to pay for the reduction of 4,100 kids. So we were in
9 a quandary. Do we go forward with the budget
10 resolution? But we knew that if we didn't, the problem
11 was just -- it was just a mandate approach to the
12 problem.

13 Eventually the budget resolution was passed.
14 It went to the Governor who, prior to the full budget
15 coming to his desk, said that he hoped to use up all
16 the ink in his veto pen, and he used up quite a bit of
17 that ink but with very few budget resolutions made it
18 past him. The child care resolution was reduced from
19 \$4 million to \$2 million, but he did sign to provide an
20 additional \$2 million to reduce the child care waiting
21 list, one of the few things that he actually -- the
22 budget resolutions he supported and signed.

1 MS. BLANK: That's great. Betty, what about
2 some of your most effective strategies?

3 MS. HOLCOMB: I think the most effective
4 thing we did was to organize ourselves into a campaign.
5 We hired a Media Consultant, who also had worked in
6 political campaigns. So we worked with very
7 disciplined messages, a very short focus. We decided
8 that our goal was going to be to focus only on the
9 money, even though there were a lot of other issues.
10 That was a unifying point for all the people who joined
11 the campaign.

12 We had advocates. We had service providers.
13 We had unions. We were all working together. We spoke
14 as the Campaign For Children. Sometimes our
15 organizations were identified, but primarily we did it
16 as the Campaign For Children. Our consultants had us
17 do data the way that a lot of the people had described.
18 We broke out all the cuts by City Council District,
19 which is very much like legislative districts. That
20 was incredibly motivating to all of our City Council
21 folks, who joined us. We broke out our different
22 pieces of work in the campaign, so we had four or five

1 people who were basically camped out at our City
2 Council, working with the lead committee on child care
3 issues and helping to strategize with them. We had
4 every single City Council person signed on.

5 Mayor Bloomberg was our target, because he
6 really has the ultimate power on the budget. So we
7 were also focusing on people who we knew, potentially
8 who were going to run for Mayor at some point. We
9 depended primarily on service providers. I come out of
10 a child care resource and referral agency. So we were
11 all identifying parents and training parents to speak
12 and to stay on our very focused message.

13 We had some debates about whether or not we
14 were going to talk about school readiness or working
15 parents. We did use a lot of those messages, but
16 basically we had our consultants
17 advise us. We had a lot of success with the idea that
18 these were families that were working hard, playing by
19 the rules, but were going to be defeated by the lack of
20 child care subsidies. So it was a sort of "keep parents
21 earning and children learning" message. I think the
22 sharp focus, the unified message, people setting aside

1 their organizational issues and identities really
2 helped to make this a success.

3 MS. BLANK: And we always thought it was a
4 children's campaign. Thanks, Betty. Kim and Scott, if
5 you haven't done this, what coalitions and partners did
6 you work with, and what roles did they play?

7 MS. JOHNSON: I would almost say ditto
8 to Betty's last comments. Again, resource and
9 referral agencies were really active, mobilizing staff within
10 the agencies themselves, as well as the parents that they
11 worked with, giving them, again, that critical information
12 about the dual support and value of the system;
13 keeping parents earning, while children are learning.
14 In this particular budget proposal, there was something
15 that every stakeholder group could hate. Different groups and
16 stakeholders were able to really join together and come up
17 with a consistent message and stay on that message throughout
18 the budget process, which really helped the effort.

19 And also, again, targeting those key
20 policymakers, whether it be the women's caucus, the

1 ethnic caucus, or simply the budget staff.

2 It was having a frame work, a time frame, and a strategy
3 that everyone could use together in those efforts.

4 MS. BLANK: Scott?

5 MR. MOORE: The only thing I would add
6 to what Kim said is we also benefitted from some
7 unusual partners in the business community and the
8 criminal justice community, who also joined us in
9 fighting these cuts. Given it was such a big threat,
10 we were able to build a really big coalition to fight
11 it and that was very key.

12 MS. JOHNSON: We have provided several sample
13 joint letters that the
14 partners put together that will be available after the call.

15 MS. BLANK: Good. Christine?

16 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. So in Illinois, we have
17 a really strong core of advocates for early care and
18 education who have a very consistent presence in the
19 State Capitol. Through this coalition, we've really
20 worked to mobilize our individual basis, but we're also
21 really strategic and lockstep inside the Capitol

1 Building, working with the Governor's Office, the
2 General Assembly, and legislative staff. I guess I can
3 just ditto a lot of the other commenters with having
4 unified messages and being really strategic about
5 targeting key legislative leaders and decision-makers
6 at those important parts of the legislative session.

7 Then in addition to that, we also held
8 strategy calls every Friday afternoon, just to debrief
9 the week, you know, figure out where we stand and then
10 what the plan is for moving forward with the next week.
11 So we had our broader goals for the entire session, but
12 then we continually touched base, on a weekly basis, to
13 make sure we're sticking to the message and making any
14 changes to the strategy that might be necessary based
15 on what the issue de jure is.

16 MS. BLANK: Sheila, in terms of coalitions
17 and partners, anything unusual? You talked about
18 getting everyone on the same page.

19 MS. HANSEN: Right. And that wasn't
20 necessarily easy either. Because we had people at the
21 table that were interested in different things. You
22 had people who wanted regulation. You had people who

1 thought we just needed to work on quality. You had
2 people who wanted to just work on increasing
3 eligibility; and people who wanted to work on provider
4 rates. We did have to approach this in a way that, we
5 took it, with the forest and the trees, and look at how
6 we can have an impact and what's the greatest need
7 right now, and then how can we address that but not
8 forget about those other things that are so important.

9 We did have department staff on our
10 coalition, which I think is probably unusual. The
11 Department of Human Services, who have the child care
12 program; and the Department of Education; the
13 Department of Public Health and the Department of
14 Management. They obviously couldn't sign off on our
15 plan, but we wanted to make sure that they knew what we
16 were doing and that they weren't going to be obstacles,
17 and that they could provide data and information for
18 us. They didn't even have to agree with us, and there
19 were times when they didn't, on some of the items. But
20 we just felt that they were key players and they needed
21 to be part of the coalition.

22 MS. BLANK: Cynthia, any different coalitions

1 or partners in this?

2 MS. RICE: Sure. Our members played a role
3 in contacting the various powers that be, but three
4 groups come to mind. Certainly our resource and
5 referral agencies. They provided us with their waiting
6 list numbers and parents, the name of the parents.
7 We've been working with them for years. We've
8 collaborated and been partners. We recognize that
9 they're in a tough spot, because by giving us the
10 information, they were kind of biting the hand that
11 feeds them. Their money is from the state and with the
12 waiting list numbers so high, I know that they
13 recognized that their funding source, the Department of
14 Human Resources, was going to take it on the chin, and
15 they did it anyway.

16 I think that they recognized that it's hard
17 for them to advocate internally sometimes, but that we
18 play a different role and we can do that. I think that
19 we, as an organization, we try to be good stewards of
20 how they're taking a chance in entrusting us to
21 advocate for their families.

22 Also, the media. Our Communications Director

1 has a great relationship with most of our -- she's a
2 former reporter. She'll do a lot of the legwork for
3 them, to help them put the story together. So she
4 found the families. She did the initial interview.
5 She provided the reporters with data. That really
6 helped move that media end, and families. I guess I
7 wanted to just mention that next question.

8 MS. BLANK: Okay. I see what you mean.
9 Betty, in terms of coalitions you haven't talked about?

10 MS. HOLCOMB: The groups I haven't
11 heard people mention that we did get engaged, were
12 higher education. We got professors, who train early
13 childhood teachers, who are interested in the early
14 childhood field, engaged. We got principals from
15 public schools involved. I would say that we tried to
16 engage, in an organized way, clergy, and also business
17 leaders, but we did not have nearly as much success
18 with them. I think partly because of the flood of
19 issues that the clergy are dealing with, in terms of
20 social services, and the business front is just a big
21 challenge in New York City.

22 MS. BLANK: We'd like you to wrap up.

1 Thinking about what you would do differently next time.
2 Kim, do you want to start? It sounds like a lot of you
3 were very effective.

4 MS. JOHNSON: Scott mentioned the
5 hundreds of articles that were published were really
6 key and talked about provider impact
7 and the impact on the families and the infrastructure.
8 We would like to increase media visibility.
9 Scott worked on this as well, and using some of the
10 social networking sites like Facebook, to bring awareness
11 to the issues and engage some of the families and the
12 members of different organization. So using media and
13 social marketing tools more, I think is
14 something that we're looking at in the future.

15 Because California's budget deficit was so large,
16 the \$15 Billion deficit, it was difficult in that kind
17 of climate to engage some of our more nontraditional partners
18 in our efforts. They were also fighting large cuts. We would
19 like to find ways to engage more non-traditional partners.

1 that were coming forward. We'd like to find additional
2 ways to engage some of our nontraditional partners and
3 just partners from some of the other social service
4 fields.

5 MS. BLANK: Makes sense, that everyone was
6 getting a big hit. Scott, what would you do
7 differently? Anything different?

8 MR. MOORE: Yeah. I would just add that we
9 really need to do better with our Governor, Jerry
10 Brown. He got a budget sent to him with \$80 million of
11 cuts and he used his blue pencil to increase that to
12 \$140 million. The reality is he did not see the value
13 of early learning or child care. We need to do what we
14 can. I think we're all trying. We're all working on
15 that. But at the end of the day, he had a lot of
16 power. He makes a lot of decisions. I think we'll all
17 be focusing on trying to convince him of the value of
18 early childhood.

19 MS. BLANK: Yeah. He was particularly
20 striking because I think the first round -- when he was
21 first Governor -- when he was Governor, the last time,
22 he was way more sympathetic. Christine, things that

1 you might do differently next time?

2 MS. ROBINSON: Sure. I think for the most
3 part we were actually successful beyond our
4 expectations, even though we did sustain a cut to child
5 care. No one expected that we'd get out without any
6 cuts. The cuts that we did get was much less
7 significant than what was originally proposed, and we
8 were able to pass a supplemental to get through the end
9 of FY12. But in hindsight, I think we could have been
10 more proactive as a coalition on behalf of pre-K.
11 There was so much focus on child care, because of the
12 devastating cuts that were proposed. The Governor's
13 Office hadn't proposed any cuts to our state pre-K
14 program. The State Board of Education hadn't proposed
15 any cuts to state pre-K. But in the end, it was on the
16 chopping block and we ended up with about an 8% cut.
17 So we're still working to fight for that right now,
18 trying to get a restoration, possibly during our veto
19 session, in late November. But, like I said, in
20 hindsight, we could have been a little bit more
21 proactive on that front.

22 MS. BLANK: Sheila?

1 MS. HANSEN: I agree with the last two
2 speakers. I think we would do things differently with
3 the Governor. He focused this year on education reform
4 a lot, and because of a big fight we had in the session
5 prior to this one, around preschool and state-funded
6 preschool, when he was focusing on early education
7 reform this year, he made it very clear that he did not
8 want to include early care and education. He wanted to
9 leave out pre-K and anything below pre-K. That was
10 frustrating to all of us, because if you're talking
11 about education reform, and third grade reading scores,
12 we think that that's a pretty important piece of it.
13 And so I think we need to involve him more and talk a
14 little bit more about child care and the role that it
15 plays, but I think he just didn't really want to hear
16 anything about that, and his staff too.

17 MS. BLANK: Cynthia?

18 MS. RICE: Yeah. I think one of the things -
19 - I don't know if this is what we'd do better, what
20 we'd do differently, but it certainly was a problem.
21 It was really tough finding families. The resource and
22 referral agencies worked with us. Once we found them,

1 while they had no problem telling us how their lives
2 were affected by the lack of funding for child care,
3 most of them were very hesitant to be the face of that
4 specific issue. They read the blogs. While they
5 supported our work, they were really scared, that by
6 telling their stories, they'd be criticized for being
7 in the situation that they were in. We've all read the
8 blogs, and they're often incredibly negative. We knew
9 that having the real stories would make the difference,
10 it was very difficult to provide the gray, by providing
11 them with families who were willing to talk publicly
12 about their problems.

13 And the other problem we have is the process
14 -- is the process problem and how New Jersey presents
15 the budget. I'm personally sick of hearing the word
16 "transparency" thrown around, but how specific
17 information comes out in our budget, how it's
18 communicated to the public is a problem. The Governor
19 makes the speech. The budget and brief comes out, but
20 the specifics don't come out till much later. This is
21 a problem for advocacy. So we're kind of a piecemeal,
22 or a latency advocacy, until we get the full picture.

1 We're always kind of taking two steps forward, one step
2 back, because we don't have the clear picture. So
3 that's a big problem in being an effective advocate.

4 MS. BLANK: CNN did a very good story on
5 child care and we faced something similar. We found a
6 parent in the Maryland R&R, that helped us, and then
7 she didn't want to be on.

8 MS. RICE: Right. Right.

9 MS. BLANK: And the last minute, we scurried
10 around and another parent was willing to do it. I
11 think it's -- maybe the lesson learned on that is
12 backup parents. Right? We were looking for parents
13 for testimony this week, and too, a number of them
14 couldn't take off work, although they wanted to do it.
15 Yeah. You need a...

16 MS. RICE: Helen, their reasons were they
17 read the blogs.

18 MS. BLANK: Right. They do read. Right.

19 MS. RICE: We could help them with their
20 boss. You can't control the blogging.

21 MS. BLANK: I think that was the CNN woman's

1 hesitancy too. They don't like being the face.

2 MS. RICE: That's right. People are mean.

3 MS. BLANK: Right. Betty?

4 MS. HOLCOMB: I don't think I have anything

5 to add. I think we're really happy with the success we

6 had. We would love to be proactive, especially given

7 that we have a mail campaign. We would like to be

8 putting forward positive proposals. We also hope to

9 take the lessons that we learned in the city, about

10 being unified and running a campaign, to the state

11 level. So I think those things are all things we're

12 thinking about.

13 I think the very deep concerns about getting

14 divided over things like costs versus quality still

15 haunt a lot of people, and we're trying to stay

16 together around the message of access to quality. But

17 in this time of scarce resources, I think we -- like

18 probably everyone else on the phone -- are still

19 looking for answers about how we stay unified; how we

20 make this more of a priority for executives and

21 legislatures.

22 MS. BLANK: Yeah. That was a good sum up.

1 Here's a question that came in. This looks like, it
2 was very interesting that you all did this mostly
3 within the early childhood community, as your team,
4 with some good media. Someone mentioned law
5 enforcement. Betty, now I'm adding to the question.
6 Betty mentioned how hard it was to get business and
7 clergy. Anyone, comment on that? It was mostly an
8 early childhood effort?

9 MS. HANSEN: This is Shelia. I think that
10 that's a good point. We did reach out to business.
11 We've had a hard time getting them reengaged again in
12 early childhood, in Iowa. They were engaged a lot,
13 actually, with the pre-K talks. I think that that was
14 to our advantage though, also. Because they did sort
15 of say to the foundation that they do believe in early,
16 investments early on. That did help us and they knew
17 that we could bring them in, if we needed to, even
18 thought we might not have been able to. So that's a
19 really good point. It's something that we're
20 continuing to work on. We'll try to get a bigger
21 business involvement in this, because it's a five-year
22 plan for us. We're not done. We have lots to do yet,

1 as I'm sure many other states do.

2 MS. BLANK: Other comments to that question
3 about specifics? Well, some of this early childhood,
4 Cindy, was successful a lot on its own. Correct? By
5 unifying.

6 MS. HOLCOMB: Right.

7 MS. RICE: By unifying.

8 MS. JOHNSON: Yes, I think that's true.

9 The other piece that was kind
10 of working in our favor is that, for instance, the
11 restructuring proposal that was coming forward, the
12 counties -- we have some big counties, like the county
13 of Los Angeles, came out against the restructuring proposal.
16 This helped to discredit the Governor's proposal, having these
17 agencies that were supposed to be administering
18 the program actually come out against it.

19 MS. BLANK: That makes sense. Does anyone

1 have a positive platform for the next legislative
2 session? That's a question that came up.

3 MS. RICE: This is Cindy, from New Jersey. I
4 think the wins, I guess we could call it, have allowed
5 us to think that we need to start right now, in looking
6 at our broader early childhood agenda and how it's
7 linked with the 2014 budget. Already we're seeing some
8 issues that we're watching, to make sure that we are
9 talking about these issues now, so that we're laying a
10 foundation that it's not -- that we're making the pitch
11 when the budget season starts, but long before that,
12 and starting to educate our legislature and our
13 Governor about what's happening on different issues.

14 For example, we're watching the child
15 care waiting list. We're thinking about how can we
16 expand our nationally recognized preschool program? So
17 we're trying to think more systemically and begin to
18 talk about it much more broadly, then just the usual
19 suspects.

20 MS. HANSEN: This is Sheila. I think that we
21 have, hopefully -- we still have about a billion
22 dollars in our bank and our receipts keep coming in.

1 Our tax receipts keep coming in, pretty much over the
2 estimates. So we're sitting pretty good financially,
3 although we are a farming state and we are experiencing
4 a drought. So that could affect us in the coming
5 months. So financially, we should be okay. Obviously,
6 with the election, we don't know what that's going to
7 bring.

8 We have a key legislator, who's not up for
9 election, the one I spoke about earlier, who has all of
10 a sudden taken on child care and he wants to do a
11 children's budget and he wants child care to lead the
12 way on that budget. I think that's something we have
13 to look forward to. So we really have to make sure
14 that we do have our ducks in a row and we are starting
15 earlier, like Cynthia said, and make sure that he has
16 all the information that he needs. But I'm looking
17 forward to it.

18 MS. BLANK: Illinois recognized the
19 proposed pre-K cuts late in the game. For any of you
20 that were working just on child care, was there
21 anything going on at the same time, around pre-K, in
22 your state, or in your city?

1 MS. HOLCOMB: In New York State, we were
2 fighting to protect the pre-K money. We were also --
3 and I think this is going on around the country --
4 fighting potential cuts to kindergarten, because we
5 have some districts that only have half-day K, and our
6 compulsory school age is six, not five, even though a
7 lot of parents don't know that.

8 In New York, and I think Cindy could speak to
9 this in New Jersey, with the kind of limits that have
10 been placed on education funding -- and California
11 certainly had to live with this for a long time. We
12 now have all kinds of caps on the amounts of money that
13 School Districts could raise. We have Superintendents
14 looking for cuts in what they call unfunded non-
15 mandated services. So we mounted a big campaign with
16 Citizen Action, a new partner, and the Alliance for
17 Quality Education, the education advocates, to fight
18 cuts to pre- K and Kindergarten.

19 We also were hoping to get a little more
20 money into pre-K. We did not get that, but we do
21 believe we're positioned for next year, because we made
22 a very visible campaign around those issues in the

1 state legislature during the last budget season.

2 MS. BLANK: If anyone has any more

3 questions, they can email them.

4 Otherwise, Hannah will wrap it up.

5 MS. MATTHEWS: Thanks, Helen. We just want

6 to thank everybody for calling in today. I want to say

7 how great it is to hear some positive news and some

8 really good outcomes, given that we know we've all been

9 fighting some really difficult fights in the last

10 couple of years. You folks on the phone, our state

11 presenters in particular, know just how hard that's

12 been. Thank you so much for sharing your strategies

13 with us. I want to remind everybody that we will have

14 a copy of -- a recording of the call, as well as the

15 transcript, both on our website, www.clasp.org, as well

16 as NWLC's website, www.nwlc.org. We thank you all for

17 joining us. Have a great day.