

Amidst national debate on support for moms, Israel fights to put more money in the pockets of middle class families

Huntington, NY— Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) visited Rainbow Chimes in Huntington to announce legislation that would put more money in the pockets of middle class families paying for child care. Current law allows for as much as a 35 percent tax credit for child care costs up to \$3,000 (or \$6,000 for two or more children) for children under age 13 whose parents work or go to school. However, current law limits benefits to families with incomes greater than \$43,000 to a 20 percent credit. Rep. Israel's legislation, the Middle Class Dependent Care Fairness Act, will remove that unfair disparity so all families can access the 35 percent tax credit, nearly doubling the credit for many families on Long Island.

Rep. Israel said, "Cable TV hosts have been sniping at each other over which party respects moms more. Well here's something tangible we can actually do to help middle-class families. Families in our community already face the highest costs-of-living in the country, should be able to claim the full tax credit for their child care expenses, and parents should not feel like they have choose between entering or leaving the workforce to pay for childcare. It's not good for the economy to force mothers to leave the workforce because they can't afford childcare. This legislation will allow families to keep a little more of their hard-earned salaries while ensuring their kids have access to top-notch care."

According to the National Association of Child Care Resources & Referral Agencies, child care costs for school-age children are about \$10,400 in New York State, the highest in the nation. That equals more than four times the \$2,160 per child in Mississippi. And, costs are even higher for center-based infant care, which ranges from \$4,550 in Mississippi to about \$13,650 in New York.

The Middle Class Dependent Care Fairness Act would help alleviate this cost by allowing families making more than \$43,000 to claim the full 35 percent tax credit for child care costs of up to \$3,000 (or \$6,000 for two or more children). The bill will remove the phase down, effectively doubling the Dependent Care Credit for most Middle Class families.