

CHILDREN'S STUDIES 25 (2200): SPECIAL TOPICS:
CHILDREN, GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY
IN NEW YORK STATE

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES
FALL 2010

OCTOBER 21, 2010

GUEST SPEAKER: SENATOR VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY
Chair, New York State Senate Committee on Children and Families

Velmanette Montgomery is recognized for her effective leadership and steadfast commitment to her constituents of north and central Brooklyn, as well as to New Yorkers statewide.

In her role as Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Children and Families, Senator Montgomery is committed to helping young people achieve positive outcomes through reform of the State's juvenile justice, foster care and adoptive care systems. In 2008 the Senator authored a law that allows adopted children to claim two parents of record, even if one parent dies before the adoption is final.

Other significant laws sponsored by the Senator include a measure that allows community boards throughout New York City to apply for and receive state funding through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program. She is also responsible for a law that enables consumers to receive from their utility provider "Time-of-Day" service, a cost-saving measure that redirects the use of electricity to off-peak, low-demand hours.

Senator Montgomery continues to be one of New York's leading proponents of school-based health care as a model system for delivering comprehensive primary and mental health services to children of all ages, in the school setting where youth spend most of their day. The Senator's Teen Health Agenda includes legislation that requires, among other things, the teaching of age appropriate, medically accurate sexuality education in kindergarten through 12th grade. Senator Montgomery is the co-sponsor of the law that allows for the certification of nurse practitioners, and she spearheaded the campaign to stem the spread of AIDS among intravenous drug users through legalized needle exchange programs.

As a respected advocate for criminal justice reform and a member of the Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction, Senator Montgomery sponsored a law that prevents New Yorkers from being arbitrarily denied a license to barber or practice cosmetology just because they spent time in prison. The Senator is also the sponsor of a "merit time" bill, which has been praised by criminal justice advocates statewide, and continues to lead efforts to improve and expand transitional services for men and women released from prison.