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Statement from *#bFair2DirectCare* Coalition On Gov Cuomo's Failure to Include Living Wage Funding for Direct Care Workers in the Executive Budget

"Less than two years ago, Governor Cuomo stood in the War Room, raised his right hand and pledged he would not sign a budget that failed to include living wage funding for direct care workers. He did this with great fanfare, as you can see from this photo. He lived up to that pledge, but that was then."



"Yesterday, the same Governor Cuomo proposed a budget that includes zero dollars to fulfill the six-year plan to provide a living wage for these same Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) he once fought so far hard for. One hundred thousand DSPs are wondering what happened to the Governor Cuomo of March 28, 2017 who held up his right hand, swore his support and became a champion for direct care workers and New Yorkers with developmental disabilities they support.

"*#bFair2DirectCare* could not have been clearer in what's needed in this year's budget to help direct care workers achieve a living wage – the kind of economic justice Governor Cuomo has championed for other working New Yorkers. More than 200 people rallied in the War Room last week for *#bFair2DirectCare* funding in the Governor's budget, making it unmistakably clear through their presence and chants that thundered through the Capitol. The funds our workers seek amount to a rounding error in the Governor's \$175 billion budget proposal.

"While we appreciate the funding included in the Governor's budget necessary to bring DSPs up to the new minimum wage requirements he championed, this does nothing to adjust their compensation to the living wage their talents and dedication justify. DSPs still must work multiple jobs just to make ends meet.

"Governor, take the opportunity in your 30-day amendments, correct this omission and add the *#bFair2DirectCare* living wage funding DSPs deserve to your budget proposal. Then you once again can be a champion to direct care workers and New Yorkers with disabilities they support.

"The DSP workforce is 73 percent female and 52 percent black and Latino. No Justice Agenda for New York State can be complete without economic justice for DSPs."

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