National Employment Law Project
Technical Report

When Work Doesn't Pay:
The Public Cost of Low-Wage Jobs in New York State

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For more information on the New York State report, contact Annette Bernhardt at 212-285-3025, x350, or abernhardt@nelp.org. For more information on the Illinois report, see: http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/uicued/Publications/RECENT/HiddenPublicCostMain.pdf. For more information on the Wisconsin report, see: http://cows.org/pdf/rp-low-wage-jobs.pdf.

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I. Overview

Over the past three decades, New York has built itself into the most unequal state in the nation. The gap between rich and poor is at an all-time high and continues to expand regardless of whether the state is in recession or at the peak of the business cycle (see sidebar on next page). For families lucky enough to share in the boom, average incomes are comfortably in the six figure range. But for many more New Yorkers, it is a daily struggle to support their families and cover just the most basic costs—food, housing, clothing, health care and transportation.

At the root of this inequality is the stubborn persistence of low-wage jobs and working poverty. As manufacturing flight continues, it is the service sector that increasingly provides the jobs that most families depend on. And that sector is very much bifurcated between the high-paying jobs we associate with Wall Street and management consultants, and the low wages that too often characterize service jobs such as child care, dishwashing, taxi driving, industrial laundry, food preparation, and retail sales. In 2004, between a quarter and a third of workers in the state had low-wage jobs.[1] And it's not just a matter of low wages. New York has seen a stronger decline in employer-provided health insurance and pension coverage than the U.S. as a whole since the early 1990s.[2] In fact, by one estimate, only 25 percent of jobs in the state qualify as good jobs—paying at least $32,000 a year and offering health insurance and a pension.[3]

The upshot is that between a quarter and third of families in New York are working poor. Stuck in low-wage and dead-end jobs, they battle significant daily hardship, chronic household debt, and a precarious existence that any crisis can unhinge and catapult into poverty. But working families aren't the only ones who bear the burden of low-wage jobs.

In this report we document that when work doesn't pay, taxpayers also share in the resulting costs, raising fundamental questions about who is responsible for ensuring that working families can make ends meet.

When jobs pay too little, working families are forced to turn to public programs such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), child care subsidies and food stamps. And when jobs don't provide health insurance—or when the cost of buying into an employer's plan is too high—families either have to make do with emergency room visits or enroll in public programs such as Medicaid or Child Health Plus.

Snapshot of working poverty and economic inequality in New York State

Family income inequality

- New York had the greatest income inequality of any state in the country in 2001-2003, the last years for which data are available. The top fifth of families in the state had an average pre-tax income of $178,789 while the bottom fifth had an average income of $14,185, a ratio of 13 to 1.[4]
- Over the past 20 years, the incomes of the top fifth have grown five times faster than the incomes of the poorest fifth—significantly outpacing the national growth in inequality.[5]
- In 2005, the top fifth of earners in Manhattan made 52 times what the lowest fifth made—$365,826 compared with $7,047, making the county the most unequal in the country.[6]

Working poverty

- More than a third (35 percent) of New York's working families with one to three children did not earn enough to cover their basic household needs in 2004—food, housing, clothing, child care, health care and transportation.[7]
- More than a quarter (27 percent) of the two million working families in New York State, or 551,553 families, were considered "low-income" in 2002.[8]

Low-wage jobs

- In 2004, almost a quarter of workers in the state (22 percent) had jobs paying less than $9.28 an hour, below the federal poverty line for a family of four. More than a third (36 percent) earned less than $11.60 an hour, or 125 percent of the poverty line.[9]
- More than one in ten New Yorkers (12 percent) earned *very* low wages—less than $7.00 per hour—in 2000.[10]
- Between 1979 and 2004, the lowest 10th of workers in the state saw their wages decline by 3 percent in real terms, whereas the top 10th of workers saw their wages increase by 36 percent.[11]
- Industries in the state that lost jobs between 2000 and 2004 had average yearly earnings of $64,382; industries that gained jobs had average earnings of only $38,074.[12]
- In 2004, only 25 percent of jobs in the state qualified as good jobs—paying at least $16 dollar an hour or $32,000 a year, with a pension and an employer-provided health insurance plan for which the employer paid at least part of the premium.[13]

The fact that working families have been able to depend on these programs is a great tribute to New York's proud history of establishing a strong safety net for its residents. It is a history that stems all the way back to the New Deal era. Often local experimentation in New York developed public support programs that were subsequently adopted at the national level. And the tradition continues today, with New York ranking among the most generous of states in its public support programs. This commitment—to ensure a minimally adequate standard of living for everyone—should remain a hallmark of leadership for the state.

But that worthy goal is undermined when employers pursue low-road business strategies based on holding down wage and benefit costs, in the process shifting greater and greater responsibility to the taxpayer.

To wit, a strong economy and labor market are fundamentally based on three pillars:

- *Good jobs*—that pay living wages and provide economic security
- *Training programs* —that sustain innovation and productivity growth
- *A strong safety net*—that supports workers as well as the unemployed and those unable to work

Aligning these three components is a difficult balancing act, one that has challenged public policy for decades. For example, in the 1970s the supply of educated workers exceeded demand, and newspapers were rife with stories of "the overeducated American" and cab drivers with graduate degrees. In the 1980s, the seminal volume *A Nation at Risk* raised the alarm that U.S. workers were lagging behind in math and reading skills, hampering the country's ability to innovate, create jobs and compete with other countries. And in the 1990s, welfare reform moved millions of former recipients into the labor market, only to confront the problem of too many low-wage jobs and not enough good ones.

Now the concern is that the continuing erosion of job quality is putting pressure on safety net and work support programs. There is no easy response to this "responsibility shift," in part because we are only starting to understand the true contours of it. How many workers and their families are forced to rely on public programs? Which programs do they use the most? Are the programs adequately meeting their needs? And what are the characteristics of the jobs that these workers are employed in? At this point, we have very little data to answer any of these questions.

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In this report, we document the public cost of low-wage jobs in New York State. Using administrative and survey data, we estimate the share of public program benefits going to working families, and analyze the jobs and industries that the working poor depend on but that too often fail to provide a living wage and adequate health care.

Our goal is to help inform a range of policy debates in New York:

- What is the best mix of policies to support working families?
- How do we grow a strong economy that delivers good jobs, at a time of fierce domestic and global competition?
- What tools can the state use to encourage high-road business practices on the one hand, and discourage low-wage strategies on the other?
- What is the right distribution of responsibility between the public and private sector in ensuring the economic security of working families?

These are difficult questions that will take considerable political will to confront. Our hope is that by documenting the true costs of low-wage jobs and short-sighted economic development strategies, we can help move these debates forward.

The remainder of the report is organized as follows.

In Section II, we review the definitions, data sources and methods that underpin our analyses. Section III then gives a brief overview of the six public support programs that we focus on in the study: Medicaid; the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Food Stamps; Child Health Plus (New York's State Child Health Insurance Program); Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); and Subsidized child care programs.

Sections IV through VII present our key findings. We estimate the total number of working families enrolled in public support programs in New York, as well as the associated program costs. We document the wages these families earn, and how those wages compare to actual living costs. We analyze the characteristics of industries that have disproportionate numbers of workers enrolled in public support programs, and briefly examine the role of firm size. And we give a demographic overview of working poor families in the state.

II. Data and Methods

In this section, we describe our approach to estimating the public cost of low-wage jobs in New York State, drawing on publicly available datasets.

Snapshot overview of data and definitions used in this report	
The six public support programs analyzed in this report	1. Medicaid 2. Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) 3. Food Stamps 4. Child Health Plus - New York's State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) 5. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) 6. Subsidized Child Care
Years analyzed	2001-2004 (data reported as annual averages across that time period)
Definition of "year-round working family"	A family with one or more members who worked at least 50 weeks in a given year (either part-time or full-time).
Definition of "year-round worker"	An individual who worked at least 50 weeks in a given year (either part-time or full-time).
Definition of "enrolled" family or worker	Family or worker enrolled in at least one of the six public support programs
Upshot	This report very likely underestimates the total cost of public program support going to working families in New York State, because (1) we only include six programs in our analysis and (2) we use a very restrictive definition of working family.

1. The six public support programs included in our study

In choosing which programs to analyze, we used the following criteria.

- The program had to be large, in terms of the number of individuals and families enrolled, the total annual cost, or both.
- The program had to be means-tested, such that it was available to individuals or families specifically because they had low incomes.
- The program had to be available to families with at least one member in the labor force or potentially in the labor force; thus we excluded programs (or parts of programs) which focused exclusively on those who were retired or unable to work because of disability.

- The program had to be focused on supplementing an individual's or family's income. Thus, we also excluded programs (or parts of programs) that only provided subsidies for training and education.
- Finally, only programs for which we had both government administrative data and survey-based individual-level data were included in the analysis. Local programs and health care programs for indigents are examples of taxpayer-funded programs that were not included because the necessary data was not available.

Based on these criteria, we identified the following six programs for analysis: Medicaid; the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Food Stamps; Child Health Plus (New York's State Child Health Insurance Program - SCHIP); Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); and subsidized child care programs.

Each of these programs is described more fully in the next section. But we should highlight that because we are analyzing only these six programs, our estimates of the cost of public program support going to working families in New York is conservative.[14]

2. Data sources

This report relies on two data sources for New York State. The first data source is aggregate government administrative data for the six public support programs identified above. These data sets provide the most accurate information on annual enrollment and annual costs for each program.[15] Note that we only include benefits disbursed in our measure of annual costs for each program; that is, we do not include costs associated with program administration.

The second data source is the March Supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS).[16] This dataset provides individual-level demographic and employment information that is representative of the entire state's population.

When combined, these two data sources give us the information necessary to assess the cost of low-wage jobs in New York: accurate statewide program enrollment and cost data, and accurate individual-level demographic and employment data (the combination process is described below).

In order to reach a sufficient sample size for the CPS, and because program enrollment and costs naturally fluctuate from year to year, we base our analysis on pooled data for the four most recent years for which CPS data are available: 2001-2004.[17] To match the CPS data, we collected administrative data for the six programs from 2000-2004.[18]

3. Combining the two data sources

Our logic in combining administrative program data with CPS data is as follows. On the one hand, government administrative data are the best source of accurate information on each program's enrollment and cost. However, these data are aggregate and do not give information on the individuals and families enrolled in each program—so they do not allow, for example, a calculation of the percent of enrolled families that are working families. The CPS, on the other hand, provides information on use of public support programs, labor force participation, and job characteristics for families and individuals.

We therefore use the CPS data to analyze individuals and families enrolled in public support programs, *but adjust the CPS dataset to ensure that it accurately reflects administrative figures for (1) total program enrollment and (2) cost of program benefits disbursed.*[19] We only give a brief overview of these two adjustments here; a detailed explanation is given in Appendix A (available from the author upon request).

(1) Ensuring that the CPS enrollment data accurately reflect the administrative enrollment data requires adjusting the weights assigned to each CPS observation. Therefore, for each of the six programs included in our analysis, we calculated a ratio by dividing total annual administrative enrollment by total annual CPS enrollment. We then multiplied the CPS weight of enrolled families by this ratio, creating a program-specific weight that, when summed, mathematically equals total administrative enrollment for that year. We then adjusted the CPS weights of non-enrolled families so that the sum of the constructed weights is still equivalent to the total population.

(2) Ensuring that the CPS benefits-received estimates are consistent with the estimates from administrative benefits-disbursed data requires different adjustments, depending on whether or not data on benefit levels were collected by the CPS for a specific program. For programs for which the CPS collects benefits data (TANF, EITC, Food Stamps, Medicaid), we calculated a ratio by dividing total annual administrative benefits-disbursed by total annual CPS benefits-received.[20] We then multiplied reported CPS benefits for enrolled families by this ratio, creating a new benefit amount that, when summed, mathematically equals the total administrative benefit amount for that year. For programs for which the CPS does not collect data on benefit levels (Child Health Plus and subsidized child care), we simply divided the total annual administrative benefit amount by the total annual number of enrolled families, and then distributed benefits equally among CPS recipient families.

4. Defining "year-round working families" and "year-round workers"

For much of this report, we focus on families as our primary unit of analysis. We define a "family" as either a standard nuclear family of one or two parent(s) and one or more children under 18, a married couple without children, or a single individual without children. This definition is in keeping with definitions used to determine eligibility for most public assistance programs; for example, the "health insurance unit" used by Medicaid and the "taxpaying unit" used by the EITC.[21] Extended family households that include adult siblings or other extended family members are considered to be multiple families.

A key goal in our analysis is to identify working families that are enrolled in public support programs. In this report we use a stringent definition of working family, in order to ensure that at least one member has strong labor force attachment. *Specifically, we focus on "year-round working families" that have one or more members who worked at least 50 weeks in a given year.* In this way, we avoid including families whose need for public program support is driven by extended periods of time without a working member and therefore without earned income.

Note that under this definition, working family members could hold either part-time or full-time jobs and could hold multiple jobs throughout a given year; all that we require is that they have worked a total of 50 weeks or more. Note also that under our definition, a year-round working family has a maximum of two adult earners, since other workers in the household are considered to be part of another family.

Finally, for several analyses we focus on individual workers who are members of year-round working families. These are "year-round workers" who worked at least 50 weeks in the year (again, either part-time or full-time).

Stepping back, our restrictive definition of "year-round working family" means that we are underestimating the total cost of public program support going to working families in New York. For example, if a single mother with two children worked for a total nine months, with one or more spells of intermittent unemployment, her family would not be considered a year-round working family in our analysis. Ideally, we would have been able to include this family in our definition, but data constraints prevent us from being able to identify exactly which months were worked, and importantly, which public benefits supported the family during working months as opposed to non-working months.

5. Baseline data on total program enrollment and cost

Table 1 shows our baseline data on annual program enrollment and costs, after implementing the adjustments and definitions described above. Between 2001 and 2004, Medicaid was the largest program in the state, with about 1.5 million families enrolled every year and with an

annual cost of about $7.9 billion (all dollars amounts in this report are expressed in 2004 dollars unless otherwise specified). This total does not include Medicaid expenditures for the elderly or disabled (see next section). Not far behind, about 1.3 million families received the EITC every year, at an annual cost of about $3.3 billion. Of the six programs under study, these two together account for 58 percent of total enrollment and 72 percent of total costs.

The remaining four programs are significantly smaller in size. Note that TANF enrollment is second to last in annual enrollment, reflecting the significant reduction in caseload since the program's inception in 1996. (Over the last nine years, the number of families receiving TANF assistance in New York fell by 65% from 384,377 in FFY 1997 to 134,903 in FFY 2006.) Note also that our estimates for subsidized child care programs are quite small: this is in part because we are only including a subset of available programs in the state (see next section).

We should be clear that the enrollment and cost numbers in Table 1 may not perfectly match published government data. First, we combine federal, state and (where applicable) local costs, but exclude administrative costs. Second, in combining our two data sources we had to align administrative fiscal years with CPS survey years, which can result in some shifting of estimates (see Appendix A for more details, available from the author upon request). Third, we use a definition of "family" that matches definitions used by many public support programs, but that may not match more common definitions of families and households used in government datasets such as the decennial Census. Fourth, the scope of our program coverage (described in more detail in the next section) may not always match the scope of official program reporting. And finally, we average enrollment and costs across four years (2001-2004). Despite these factors, the net effect of our adjustments and definitions is generally negligible.

III. Overview of Six Public Support Programs

In this section, we review the six public support programs that we will analyze later in the report (summaries of programs are as of 2007).

1. Medicaid

Medicaid is a public health insurance program that pays for a variety of medical services for uninsured children and adults with limited income and resources. The program is managed by New York State, with 50 percent of the funding provided by the federal government and 50 percent by the state and local governments. The part of the program that covers children is called Child Health Plus A.

Medicaid participants are grouped into several categories to determine their eligibility:

- The standard eligibility thresholds apply to seniors citizens and to parents caring for dependent children under 21. Income eligibility levels vary by family size. For example, in 2007 a family of four with dependent children qualified for Medicaid if it had a monthly income less than $1109.
- Pregnant women and young children are eligible for coverage under expanded thresholds—monthly income less than 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline—$3,442 for a family of four.
- Single adults and childless couples can only qualify under restricted income eligibility thresholds that vary by family size.

In 2001, New York State also created the Family Health Plus program, which extends coverage to families whose incomes are above the traditional Medicaid thresholds—up to 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for parents ($2,582 per month for a family of four) and 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for other adults—$851 per month for single individuals and $1,141 per month for childless couples. We include Family Health Plus in our analysis of Medicaid enrollment and costs.[22]

Finally, for the purposes of this report, we excluded Medicaid enrollees who are disabled or elderly since the vast majority of these enrollees are not labor force participants.

2. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The EITC is an income tax credit for low-income workers. The EITC applies to federal income taxes; some states, including New York, also offer the EITC to low-income workers for state income taxes. Eligible workers claim the credit on their tax returns. The EITC

reduces the amount of tax owed; if the credit exceeds the amount of taxes owed, it results in a tax refund.

Eligibility thresholds vary by family size and structure. For a single taxpayer with no children, the federal EITC eligibility limit was $11,490 in earned income in 2004, with a maximum credit of $390. For a married couple with two or more children filing a joint return, the federal eligibility limit was $35,458 in 2004, with a maximum credit of $4,300 for those with earnings between $10,750 and $14,040. The New York State credit was phased in, beginning in 1994 at 7.5 percent of the federal credit. Since 2003, it has been 30 percent of the federal credit.

We include both the federal and state EITC in our analysis. New York City also offers a city-level EITC, but this was not included because it was only instituted in 2004.

3. Food Stamps

The Food Stamp program enables low-income families to buy food with vouchers and Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards. Food stamp recipients spend their benefits to buy eligible food in authorized retail food stores. The program is federally funded but managed and administered by the states.

Low-income families are generally considered eligible for food stamps if their monthly income is below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. In addition, households must have no more than $2,000 in resources (or $3,000 if the household includes a member who is at least 60 years old or is disabled). Households in which all members are receiving TANF or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are automatically eligible for food stamps. In 2006 monthly benefits in New York averaged $106 per person per month.

4. Child Health Plus - New York's State Child Health Insurance Program

Child Health Plus provides health insurance for children under 18 in families with incomes that exceed the Medicaid eligibility thresholds, yet are not covered by employer-sponsored health insurance and cannot afford private insurance. It is funded by a mix of federal and state funds; the federal share is 65 percent and the state share is 35 percent. Household income eligibility is set at 250 percent of the federal poverty level or $4,282 per month for a family of four. Families with incomes above 160 percent of the federal poverty level—$2,739 for a family of four—are required to pay monthly premiums ranging from $9 per child to $15 per child depending on their income level.

5. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

TANF was created in 1996 to replace Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The program provides assistance to needy families with children by giving each state an annual block grant. New York receives approximately $2.4 billion from the TANF block grant each year. The states and local social services districts provide additional funding and design and administer their programs within broad federal guidelines. We include the combined expenditures of federal, state and local funds for New York's program, which is also known as "Family Assistance."

Many recipients of TANF benefits are required to meet minimum work requirements—typically 30 hours a week. While certain non-work activities such as education can count toward work requirements, the state places a cap on such substitution. Participants with a disability are not required to work. There is a five-year lifetime limit to benefits under the federally funded TANF program but New York recipients who reach the five-year time limit are transferred to the Safety Net Assistance (SNA) program that is funded entirely with state and local funds.

Eligibility for TANF is based on a combination of family size and income and varies by social service district. In 2005 in New York City, a family of three qualified for TANF benefits if its monthly net income was below $691. For a family with no other income, the maximum monthly TANF benefit for food, clothing, transportation and utility bills would have been $291. The maximum monthly benefit for housing costs would have been $400 unless the family was facing eviction.

In addition to providing continuing support to families with children who have exhausted their five years of federal benefits, the Safety Net Assistance (SNA) program also supports low-income single adults and childless couples who are not eligible for federal TANF support. However, our focus in this study is only on the TANF program.[23]

6. Subsidized Child Care

Child care assistance in New York is delivered by a number of programs, all targeted at low-income families. The programs are funded by a mix of federal, state and local resources. Subsidies cover child care in a day care center, the child care provider's home or the child's home.

Families enrolled in the TANF program are guaranteed child care assistance if they have children under the age of thirteen.[24] Families who are not enrolled in TANF qualify for child care assistance if they meet the income eligibility guidelines: generally up to about 200 percent of the federal poverty level, though some local districts set their guidelines as low as

150 percent of poverty and as high as 275 percent of poverty. These families are also responsible for a co-payment that varies family income and by county.

Due to data constraints, in this report we analyze only a subset of the available child care programs in the state. Specifically, we focus on child care funded by New York State's Child Care Block Grant (CCBG), including TANF transfers to the CCBG. Local matching funds that localities are required to contribute in order to receive federal and state funds from the CCBG are also included.

However, the benefit amounts analyzed in this study do not include Universal Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start and Early Head Start, City University of New York (CUNY) and State University of New York (SUNY) programs, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Unmatched local funds that localities contribute above and beyond required matching funds are also not included.[25] As a result, we are understating the annual cost of subsidized child care in New York State.

IV. Working Families and Public Support Programs

In this section, we start with a series of basic questions about public support programs in New York State from 2001 to 2004. What percent of the families enrolled in these programs were year-round working families? What were the annual costs of that support? And how do those costs break down by the six programs under study—namely, Medicaid, Child Health Plus, EITC, TANF, Food Stamps, and subsidized child care?

Table 2 takes a bird's eye view, and reports that across the six programs, 40 percent of enrolled families during 2001-2004 were year-round working families. In raw numbers, that's about 893,000 families annually who had at least one year-round worker in the household, but who still needed the help of one or more public support programs. Clearly, the safety net in New York is not limited to those who cannot work or who are unable to find work—substantial numbers of enrolled families have one or more family members with strong attachment to the labor market.

Table 2 also estimates the total annual cost of the six public support programs, broken down by family type. On average, during the 2001 to 2004 period, New York families annually received approximately $15.7 billion in assistance from the six programs under study—combining federal, state and local expenditures.[26] A third of this sum, or about $5.2 billion, went to year-round working families.

Note also that the annual cost per family is less for year-round working families than for other family types ($5,900 compared to $7,800, respectively). This makes sense, since year-round working families earn more income, which reduces the amount of benefits they are eligible to receive.

1. Enrollment in individual programs

So far we've given a broad overview, summarizing enrollment and costs across the six public support programs. We now shift to a more detailed analysis: In which programs are year-round working families most likely to be enrolled? And what are the associated program costs?

Figure 1 shows annual enrollment for each of the six programs in New York between 2001 and 2004, broken down by family type. The enrollment of year-round working families was concentrated in three programs—Medicaid, EITC and Child Health Plus—and this should come as no surprise. The EITC is most obviously targeted at the working poor, with about 776,000 year-round working families using this program annually in the state (the remaining families using this program are also working families, but have members working less than 50 weeks a year.) But even Medicaid and Child Health Plus are increasingly programs

supporting the working poor, especially since the introduction of Family Health Plus with its higher eligibility thresholds.

Subsidized child care is similarly targeted at working poor families, but annual enrollment between 2001 and 2004 was much lower. This is partly because we were not able to include all of the state's child care assistance programs in our analysis (we estimate the number enrolled should be at least double); but as well, the scope of funding for these programs is simply smaller than Medicaid or the EITC.

By contrast, Food Stamps and TANF are more narrowly targeted at the lowest income families, and as a result fewer working families were enrolled in them (both in absolute terms and as a fraction of total enrollment). Still, it is worth highlighting that annually, about 188,000 families with strong labor market attachment were enrolled in the Food Stamps program between 2001 and 2004—an initial symptom of the low-wage jobs problem that will be the focus of the next section.

2. Costs of individual programs

Table 3 examines the costs associated with each program, again broken down by family type. Overall, the large majority of program costs stemmed from Medicaid and EITC, reflecting both the high numbers of families enrolled in these programs as well as the high costs associated with them (this is true for Medicaid in particular, see Table 1 to compare average costs per family across the programs). To wit, between 2001 and 2004, these two programs accounted for 79 percent of total program costs for year-round working families, with Medicaid averaging $2.1 billion annually and the EITC averaging $2.0 billion annually. The costs of the four other programs are much smaller by comparison, though when combined they account for another $1.1 billion annually.

Finally, note that the distribution of program costs is less concentrated when we look at all families combined, with Food Stamps and TANF accounting for a somewhat larger percent of total costs.

V. The Role of Low Wages

The fact that close to 900,000 year-round working families in New York State are enrolled in public support programs every year immediately raises several important questions. What types of wages are the workers in these families earning? And are they working full-time or part-time?

In what follows, we attempt to answer these questions by looking at the employment characteristics of year-round working families enrolled in one or more public support programs in New York State during 2001-2004.

1. Wages and hours worked

Working families that are enrolled in public support programs meet the income-tested eligibility requirements because their members either earn wages that are too low, work too few hours, or a combination of both.

The first part of Table 4 shows the number and percent of year-round working families enrolled in public support programs, distributed by hourly wage level. For single-earner families, we simply use the earner's hourly wage. For families with more than one earner, the hourly wage was calculated as the average of the wages received by all earners in the family, weighted by hours worked.

Close to half (43 percent) of enrolled working families earned $8.00 per hour or less—below the hourly level required to attain the federal poverty level for a four person family with full year, full time work, and hardly enough to sustain an individual, let alone a family. Another 16 percent earned between $8.01 and $10.00 an hour, and another 11 percent between $10.01 and $12.00 an hour. On the other end of the scale, 18 percent earned above $14 per hour—disproportionately families enrolled in Medicaid, Child Health Plus and subsidized child care, programs which tend to have higher eligibility thresholds.

The second part of Table 4 shows the cost of benefits going to year-round working families, distributed by hourly wage level. Not surprising given the results just presented, families with an hourly wage of $8.00 or less accounted for 49 percent of benefits to working families, at a cost of about $2.5 billion annually. Overall, the large majority of benefits (77 percent) went to families with an hourly wage of $12.00 or less.

Table 5 conducts a similar analysis, but this time looking at hours worked per week. Before analyzing this table, recall that in this report we are focusing on *year-round* working families—where one or more members worked at least 50 weeks a year. So the question we are addressing in this table is, given that these family members are working all year round,

what percent are working part-time and what percent are working full-time? (Part-time is defined as working less than 34 hours per week.)

For the sake of clarity, we distinguish between families with one earner and families with two earners, since the number of hours they can potentially work per week differs. The first part of Table 5 shows that for both groups of families, the large majority (about 80 percent in both cases) have full-time workers.[27] Similarly, the second part of Table 5 shows that the large majority of public support benefits went to families with full-time earners.

So overall, of the $5.2 billion in public support benefits that annually went to year-round working families in New York between 2001 and 2004, $4.1 billion (or 78 percent) went to families with at least one full-time worker.

2. What it takes to live in New York

The story that is emerging is one of working families that are strongly attached to the labor market, with one or more members working full-time and year-round—but for wages that are not enough to support their families. As a result, these families are eligible for one or more public support programs. In short, the problem is low-wages, more than lack of work.

To put these findings into context, it's worth looking at some indicators of what it actually takes to live in New York State.

Table 6 shows "basic family budgets" for different regions in New York State in 2004. These budgets measure the income required to have a decent—though very basic—standard of living. Included are only the amounts a family needs to spend to feed, shelter, and clothe itself and get to work and school. The calculations do not include what many would consider other reasonable expenses, such as savings, occasional restaurant meals, renters' insurance, or funds for emergencies.

Yet even these basic budgets require hourly wages that exceed what many of the enrolled working families in our study are earning—as we showed in Table 4, more than two-thirds had hourly wages of $12 an hour or less. This is far below the wage thresholds in Table 6, especially considering that the majority of the working families in our sample have only one full-time worker.

VI. The Role of Industries and Firm Size

We have just seen that low wages and the resulting lack of sufficient income are a key reason that working families in New York State are enrolled in public support programs. We now ask, in which industries are the workers from these families employed? Are they working for large or small firms? And can we say something about the characteristics of industries that have disproportionately high numbers of workers enrolled in public support programs?

In what follows, we focus on workers, rather than families, as our main unit of analysis. Specifically, we look at year-round workers whose families were enrolled in one or more public support programs during 2001-2004 in New York State—or "enrolled workers" for short.

1. Industries & public support programs

Table 7 lists the major industries in which enrolled workers were employed.[28] Starting with the first column, two industries stand out having a large and disproportionate number of year-round workers enrolled in public support programs. Health services employed an annual average of 155,000 enrolled workers (or 16 percent of the total), and retail trade employed an annual average of 137,000 enrolled workers (or 14 percent of the total).

For both industries, these employment levels were higher than one would expect on the basis of their overall share of the workforce (compare the second and third column). Together, they accounted for 30 percent of enrolled workers, but only 23 percent of the general workforce.

Looking further down in the table, there was a large middle swath of industries that employed between 50,000 and 75,000 enrolled workers. Some are traditionally low-wage industries, such as restaurants, movie theaters, child care centers, and domestic work. But others are industries—such as construction, educational services, management services and manufacturing—that have a bifurcated job structure, with a layer of good jobs at the top (in part because of union density), but then a layer of low-wage jobs at the bottom in specific industry segments, such as residential construction or security services.

A final set of industries employed about 30,000 enrolled workers or less, in part because they are small industries but also because they employ fewer enrolled workers than one would expect on the basis of their size in the economy (for example, professional services).

Figure 2 examines the same set of industries, but this time showing the annual cost of public support benefits that their enrolled workers received.[29]

Both retail trade and health services head the list again, accounting for $851 and $844 million respectively in public benefits going to year-round workers and their families. Combined, that's about 32 percent of New York's annual $5.2 billion in public support to working families. Next in line is the middle swath of industries that we already described above, averaging about $200 to $400 million each in annual costs and accounting for much of the rest of the state's total public support. Note that the rank ordering of industries in Figure 2 is somewhat different than in Table 7 (for example, retail and health services switched position in their ranking); this is because per capita benefit costs differ across the industries.

2. The role of industry wages & healthcare coverage

In Table 8 we summarize the key characteristics that predict the extent to which an industry's workforce is enrolled in public support programs: low wages and low healthcare coverage rates.

Specifically, we classified the major industries in New York State's economy into three groups, on the basis of the following dimensions: (a) their median wages, (b) the percent of their workers receiving health insurance through their employer, and (c) the percent of the industry's year-round workers enrolled in at least one of the six public support programs.

The relationship between these three characteristics is remarkably clear. Note first that industry wages and healthcare coverage move in tandem. Industries in Group 1 had a median wage of $11.06 an hour, with 45 percent of workers receiving health insurance through their employer. At the other end of the scale, Group 3 industries had a median wage of $19.23 an hour, with 74 percent of workers receiving health insurance through their employer. And Group 2 industries fell squarely in between these two poles.

More important, the higher an industry's wages and healthcare coverage, the lower the percent of its workforce having to rely on the public safety net. Almost a quarter of year-round workers in Group 1 industries was enrolled in public support programs; that number drops to 17 percent for Group 2 industries and down to 9 percent for Group 3 industries.

The upshot is that working families' reliance on safety net programs is concentrated in industries that have low median wages and low healthcare coverage rates (and note the latter can result either because the industry's employers do not offer health benefits, or because health coverage is too expensive for workers already struggling to make ends meet).

3. A closer look at retail and health services

We next focus on retail and health services in order to get a better understanding of the high program participation rates of their workers, since both industries are large in size and contain significant variation in job quality across their various segments.

As shown in the first half of Figure 3, the health services industry is made up of three main segments. Nursing homes and residential care facilities employed only 18 percent of the industry's workforce, but accounted for fully 31 percent of the industry's total public program cost. This disproportionate draw on the public dollar is in part due to the fact that this is the lowest wage segment in the industry, with relatively low numbers of workers receiving health insurance through their employer.

The hospital segment, by contrast, employed 41 percent of the industry's workforce but accounted for only 21 percent of total public program cost—a function of the segment's much higher median wages and health care coverage. The final segment, doctor's offices and outpatient clinics, lies in between the other two segments, employing 41 percent of the industry's workforce and accounting for 48 percent of its total public program costs.

The second half of Figure 3 conducts a similar analysis for three segments in the retail industry. Food and beverage stores employed 23 percent of the industry's workforce but accounted for 41 percent of its total public program cost; again, this is partly due to low wages and health benefits in this segment. By contrast, the "hard goods" segment (cars, appliances, etc.) employed 27 percent of the industry's workforce but accounted for only 14 percent of total public program cost; median wages and health care coverage in this segment are higher. The final segment is an amalgam of department stores, specialty retailers and discount stores and lies in between the other two segments, employing 50 percent of the industry workforce and accounting for 45 percent of its total public program costs.

Clearly, not all of the jobs in these two industries are poorly paid—far from it, as the above variation shows, especially in the health services industry. Still, in 2005 in New York State, healthcare support occupations such as home health aides and orderlies had a median annual income of $24,430, or $11.75 an hour for a full-time worker. For retail sales workers, median annual income was $18,200, or $8.75 an hour for a full-time worker.[30]

Combine these wages with low healthcare coverage rates (more so in retail than health services), and the result is a disproportionate number of workers who don't earn enough to support their families—and who therefore need to rely on public support programs to make up the difference.

4. A final note on the role of firm size

We end this section with a brief look at the role of firm size in predicting workers' reliance on public support programs. We approach this analysis with caution, because it relies on firm size as reported by the workers themselves—a measure that is less than satisfactory, since workers often do not have enough information to accurately gauge the number of employees at their establishment, never mind at their company as a whole.

Table 9 shows the number of year-round enrolled workers, distributed by the size of the firms in which they worked. Enrolled workers were concentrated in very small (39 percent) and very large (32 percent) businesses, and the associated public program costs mirror that enrollment. Specifically, of the $5.2 billion in public benefits going to working families annually in New York State, about $2 billion went to workers in firms under 25 employees and another $1.6 billion went to workers in firms with 500 or more employees.

Note, however, that hidden under the balanced U-shape pattern is the fact that small firms account for a larger share of total costs (38 percent) than their share of employment (28 percent) would indicate. And large firms account for a smaller share of total cost (31 percent) than their employment share (44 percent) would indicate—reflecting well-known differences by firm size in wages and health benefits.

VII. Family Demographics

In this section we look at some basic characteristics of year-round working families who were enrolled in public support programs in New York during 2001-2004.

Table 10 first looks at the household structure of different types of families in the state.[31] First note the overall pattern, which is that families enrolled in public support programs (regardless of working status) were much more likely to have children in their household than all families in the state. For example, only one third (33 percent) of all New York families had one or more children under 18—compared to 60 percent of enrolled families and 74 percent of enrolled working families.

What is reflected here is the fact that almost all of the programs we examine in this report either require that a child be present in the household (subsidized child care, Child Health Plus and TANF) or greatly favor families with a child (EITC, Medicaid).

Also important is that enrolled working families were twice as likely to consist of two adults supporting children—37 percent compared to 20 percent of all enrolled families and 18 percent of all families in the state.

Table 10 next shows that families enrolled in public support programs were more likely to be families with black or Latino heads of household, compared to all families in the state—this is regardless of working status. The distribution of families with Asian/Pacific-Islander heads of households did not differ appreciably among the various family types.

Finally, Table 11 looks at the educational attainment of adults in the New York State. In general, enrolled adults (regardless of working status) were more likely to have only a high school degree or to not have finished high school than all adults, with proportionately fewer having attained a college degree.

At the same time, it is worth noting that about a third of adults enrolled in public support programs had some college experience or a college degree—and that about three quarters had at the very least a high school degree. And these estimates do not differ significantly between whether or not the enrolled adult was working.

Endnotes

[1] Fiscal Policy Institute. 2005. *The State of Working New York 2005: Treading Water in a Tenuous Recovery*, http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/archivepages/sowny_archive.html, Figure 3.2.

[2] Fiscal Policy Institute. 2005. *The State of Working New York 2005: Treading Water in a Tenuous Recovery*, http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/archivepages/sowny_archive.html, Figure 2.3.

[3] Unpublished numbers from the Center for Economic and Policy Research, based on the methodology used in John Schmitt, *How Good is the Economy at Creating Good Jobs?* Center for Economic and Policy Research Briefing Paper, October 2005. The $16 dollar an hour benchmark was the state's median male wage in 1979.

[4] Jared Bernstein, Elizabeth McNichol and Karen Lyons. 2006. *Pulling Apart: A State-by-State Analysis of Income Trends.* http://www.epinet.org/studies/pulling06/pulling_apart_2006.pdf.

[5] Fiscal Policy Institute. 2006. *Pulling Apart in New York: An Analysis of Income Trends in New York State*. http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/PullingApartNY2006.pdf.

[6] Sam Roberts, "In Manhattan, Poor Make 2 Cents For Each Dollar To the Rich," *New York Times*, September 4, 2005.

[7] Basic Family Budget Calculator, Economic Policy Institute. http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/datazone_fambud_budget

[8] Fischer, David J. et al. *Between Hope and Hard Times: New York's Working Families in Economic Distress.* New York: Center for an Urban Future, 2004. "Low-income families" are defined as having incomes under 200 percent of the poverty line for their family size.

[9] Analysis of the Current Population Survey by the Economic Policy Institute.

[10] Fiscal Policy Institute. 2004. *Raising the Minimum Wage in New York: Helping Working Families and Improving the State's Economy*. Figure 4. http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/minmumwagereportrevised20jan2004.pdf.

[11] Analysis of the Current Population Survey by the Economic Policy Institute.

[12] Fiscal Policy Institute. 2005. *The State of Working New York 2005: Treading Water in a Tenuous Recovery*. http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/archivepages/sowny_archive.html.

[13] Unpublished numbers from the Center for Economic and Policy Research, based on the methodology used in John Schmitt, *How Good is the Economy at Creating Good Jobs?*, Center for Economic and Policy Research Briefing Paper, October 2005. The $16 dollar an hour benchmark was the state's median male wage in 1979.

[14] In addition, our estimates are conservative because we do not include that portion of program administration costs that is associated with working family enrollees.

[15] See Appendix A for a full description of data sources, available from the author upon request.

[16] The CPS's March Supplement (formally known as the Annual Social and Economic Supplement) is currently the official source of estimates of income and poverty in the United States, and has been widely used by economists to study wages, health coverage and public programs. See Appendix B for details on CPS variables and measurement, available from the author upon request.

[17] Previous to the 2001 March Supplement, the CPS did not collect data on two of the six programs included in this report (SCHIP and Subsidized Child Care).

[18] We collected data for 2000 because administrative data are typically provided by the fiscal year. Note also that administrative data were not available for all programs for all years; see Appendix A for details, available from the author upon request.

[19] Again, we do not include costs of program administration in our aggregate cost numbers; this allows us to adjust the CPS's data on benefits *received* to match the administrative data on benefits *disbursed*.

[20] In this step we used the newly created enrollment weights from step #1 above, to ensure that we could later use one weighting system to accurately analyze both enrollment and benefits.

[21] Our definition differs from the normal CPS definition of a "family" as two or more individuals related by birth or marriage. As such, for this analysis we reconfigured the CPS data into nuclear families. See Appendix B for details on CPS variables and measurement, available from the author upon request.

[22] In fact, the primary way that working families are counted as participants in the standard Medicaid program is through the enrollment of their children; adults in working families generally qualify through Family Health Plus.

[23] It is possible that some of the respondents in the CPS who received SNA benefits might have identified themselves as receiving "welfare," and thus be included in our study as TANF recipients. Data constraints do not allow us to estimate how often this occurred. But on balance, we do not expect significant bias to be introduced in our estimate of the percent of TANF enrollees that is working, because the proportion of SNA enrollees that is working would have to be quite different in order to have a noticeable effect (the two programs are roughly equal in size).

[24] After leaving TANF, families also are guaranteed Transitional Child Care for twelve months if they meet the income eligibility guidelines.

[25] The child care subsidy estimates are also conservative because the analysis assumed that 10 percent of child care funds were used for administration (the actual amount is capped at 5 percent) and does not include the $102 million contributed to the block grant by New York state as required maintenance of effort. As a result of these two factors, actual expenditures on child care subsidies are probably at least 20 percent greater than the amounts shown in this analysis.

[26] Again, administrative costs are excluded; see sections II and III for details on program coverage and funding.

[27] This finding—the high rates of full-time work—is likely in part due to our restrictive definition of working family. If we included families who worked less consistently during the year, we would likely also capture more part-time workers.

[28] See Appendix B for details on industry definitions, available from the author upon request. Note that the third column will not perfectly match published data on industry employment in New York State, because in this table we are focusing only on year-round workers.

[29] When a family had members working in different industries, we allocated the family's total public support benefits to its workers, proportionate to each worker's hours.

[30] New York State Department of Labor. Occupational Employment Statistics, New York State, Labor Market Regions and Metropolitan Areas.

[31] "Other types of families" is a catchall for non-traditional families in which there was no adult aged 19-64 present (for example, children being raised by grandparents or in orphanages). Because working families by definition have at least one adult age 19-64, there are no enrolled working families in the "other" category.

Tables

Table 1
Total enrollment and costs of six public support programs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Number of enrolled families	**Total program cost (in millions, 2004 dollars)**	Average cost per enrolled family **(2004 dollars)**
Medicaid	1,510,000	$7,922	$5,246
EITC	1,304,000	$3,333	$2,556
Food Stamps	1,058,000	$1,607	$1,518
SCHIP	504,000	$562	$1,114
TANF	319,000	$1,643	$5,150
Subsidized Child Care	169,000	$640	$3,781

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 2
Enrollment of year-round working families and costs of six public support programs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Number of enrolled families	**Percent**	**Total cost across the six programs (in millions, 2004 dollars)**	**Percent**	**Average cost per enrolled family (2004 dollars)**
Year-round working families	893,000	40%	$5,234	33%	$5,900
Other families	1,347,000	60%	$10,473	67%	$7,800
All families	2,240,000	100%	$15,707	100%	$7,000

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 3
Individual program costs by type of enrolled family

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Cost for year-round working families (in millions, 2004 dollars)	Percent	Cost for all families (in millions, 2004 dollars)	Percent
Medicaid	$2,108	40%	$7,922	50%
EITC	$2,007	38%	$3,333	21%
SCHIP	$344	7%	$562	4%
Child Care	$303	6%	$640	4%
Food Stamps	$283	5%	$1,607	10%
TANF	$188	4%	$1,643	10%
Total	*$5,234*	*100%*	*$15,707*	*100%*

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 4
Hourly wages of year-round working families enrolled in six public support programs, and associated costs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

Hourly wage (in 2004 dollars)	Number of enrolled year-round working families	Percent	Total cost across the six programs (in millions, 2004 dollars)	Percent
$8/hr. or lower	386,000	43%	$2,541	49%
$8.01-$10/hr.	139,000	16%	$887	17%
$10.01-$12/hr.	97,000	11%	$591	11%
$12.01-$14/hr.	105,000	12%	$449	9%
$14.01-$16/hr.	64,000	7%	$267	5%
$16.01 and higher	101,000	11%	$500	10%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 5
Hours worked by year-round working families enrolled in six public support programs, and associated costs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

Hours worked per week	Number of enrolled year-round working families	Percent	Total cost across the six programs (in millions, 2004 dollars)	Percent
Single-earner families				
Part-time	139,000	17%	$1,062	22%
Full-time	681,000	83%	$3,834	78%
Dual-earner families				
One or more earners worked part-time	15,000	20%	$71	21%
Both earners worked full-time	57,000	80%	$266	79%
Both family types combined				
Part-time	154,000	17%	$1,133	22%
Full-time	738,000	83%	$4,101	78%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data..

Table 6
What it takes to live in New York State

	Basic Family Budgets in 2004				
	Families with 1 parent and 1 child		Families with 2 parents and 2 children		
Region	*Annual income*	*Hourly Wage*	*Annual income*	*Hourly Wage (total across two earners)*	*Hourly Wage (divided by two earners)*
Albany-Schenectady-Troy	$35,292	$16.97	$48,900	$23.51	$11.75
Binghamton	$31,824	$15.30	$45,120	$21.69	$10.85
Buffalo-Niagara Falls	$34,224	$16.45	$47,532	$22.85	$11.43
Dutchess County	$40,560	$19.50	$53,808	$25.87	$12.93
Elmira	$32,952	$15.84	$46,272	$22.25	$11.12
Glens Falls	$33,564	$16.14	$46,884	$22.54	$11.27
Jamestown	$31,452	$15.12	$44,724	$21.50	$10.75
Nassau-Suffolk	$47,268	$22.73	$60,780	$29.22	$14.61
New York City	$44,724	$21.50	$58,656	$28.20	$14.10
Newburgh (NY portion)	$40,872	$19.65	$54,060	$25.99	$13.00
Rochester	$35,184	$16.92	$48,540	$23.34	$11.67
Syracuse	$33,684	$16.19	$47,208	$22.70	$11.35
Utica-Rome	$31,512	$15.15	$44,520	$21.40	$10.70
Rural New York State	$28,836	$13.86	$41,016	$19.72	$9.86

Source: Economic Policy Institute, 2004 Basic Family Budget Calculator; http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/datazone_fambud_budget.

Table 7
Industry distribution of year-round workers enrolled in six public support programs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Number of enrolled year-round workers	Industry's share of all year-round enrolled workers	Industry's share of all year-round workers in the labor market
Health services, including hospitals and nursing homes	155,000	16%	13%
Retail trade, including food stores	137,000	14%	10%
Arts & entertainment, hotels & restaurants	74,000	8%	6%
Other services, including repair, laundry, and private household services	67,000	7%	5%
Construction	60,000	6%	5%
Financial, insurance, real estate, and rental services	54,000	6%	9%
Durable manufacturing	54,000	6%	7%
Transportation and utilities	53,000	5%	6%
Non-durable manufacturing	52,000	5%	4%
Educational services, including K-12, colleges and training programs	51,000	5%	9%
Social services, child day care, homeless programs	51,000	5%	3%
Administrative & management services, including temp agencies and building services	51,000	5%	4%
Professional, scientific and technical services	31,000	3%	7%
Public administration	29,000	3%	6%
Information, including media, telecommunications and data processing	20,000	2%	3%
Wholesale trade	18,000	2%	3%
Agriculture, mining & forestry	8,000	1%	0.4%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 8
Industries grouped by job characteristics and percent of year-round workers enrolled in six public support programs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Industries	**Median wages (in 2004 dollars)**	**Percent of year-round workers receiving health insurance through employer**	**Percent of year-round workers enrolled in public support programs**	***Percent of overall employment***
Group 1	Retail trade, including food stores	$11.06	45%	23%	*28%*
	Arts & entertainment, hotels & restaurants				
	Other services, including repair, laundry, and private household services				
	Administrative & management services, including temp agencies and building services				
	Social services, child day care, homeless programs				
	Agriculture, mining & forestry				
Group 2	Health services, including hospitals and nursing homes	$15.38	67%	17%	*38%*
	Durable manufacturing				
	Transportation and utilities				
	Construction				
	Non-durable manufacturing				
	Wholesale trade				
Group 3	Educational services, including K-12, colleges and training programs	$19.23	74%	9%	*34%*
	Professional, scientific and technical services				
	Financial, insurance, real estate, and rental services				
	Public administration				
	Information, including media, telecommunications and data processing				

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data. Industries are sorted within group by percent of workforce.

Table 9
Firm size distribution of year-round workers enrolled in six public support programs, and associated costs

Annual averages, 2001-2004

Firm size	Number of enrolled year-round workers	Percent	Total cost across the six programs (in millions, 2004 dollars)	Percent	Percent of overall employment
Under 25 employees	376,000	39%	$1,972	38%	28%
25-99 employees	148,000	15%	$813	16%	13%
100-499 employees	133,000	14%	$818	16%	14%
500+ employees	309,000	32%	$1,631	31%	44%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 10
Characteristics of New York families, by public program enrollment and working status

Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Year-round working families enrolled in public support programs	All families enrolled in public support programs	All families
Family structure			
Families with children 18 and under, two parents	37%	20%	18%
Families with children 18 and under, one parent	36%	33%	11%
Families/individuals with no children 18 and under	26%	40%	67%
Other types of families	0%	6%	3%
Race/ethnicity of head of household			
Non-Hispanic White	41%	37%	59%
Non-Hispanic Black	23%	28%	18%
Hispanic	27%	28%	16%
Non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander	8%	6%	6%
Other	1%	1%	1%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Table 11
Characteristics of New York adults, by public program enrollment and working status

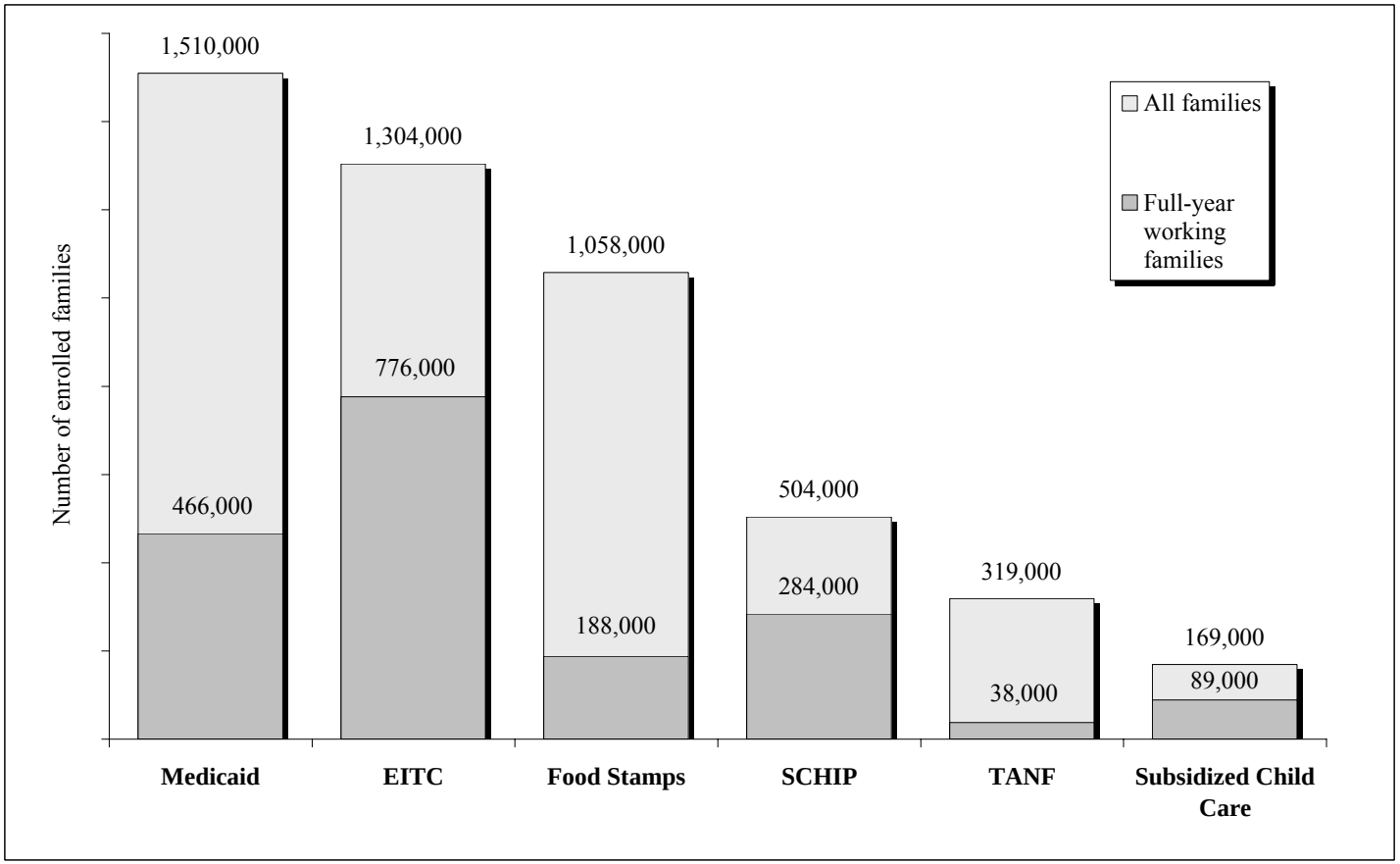
Annual averages, 2001-2004

	Year-round enrolled working adults	Enrolled adults	All adults
Education of			
Less than high school degree	24%	29%	14%
Finished high school	41%	38%	31%
Some college/associated degree	22%	22%	26%
Finished college and beyond	13%	11%	29%

Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

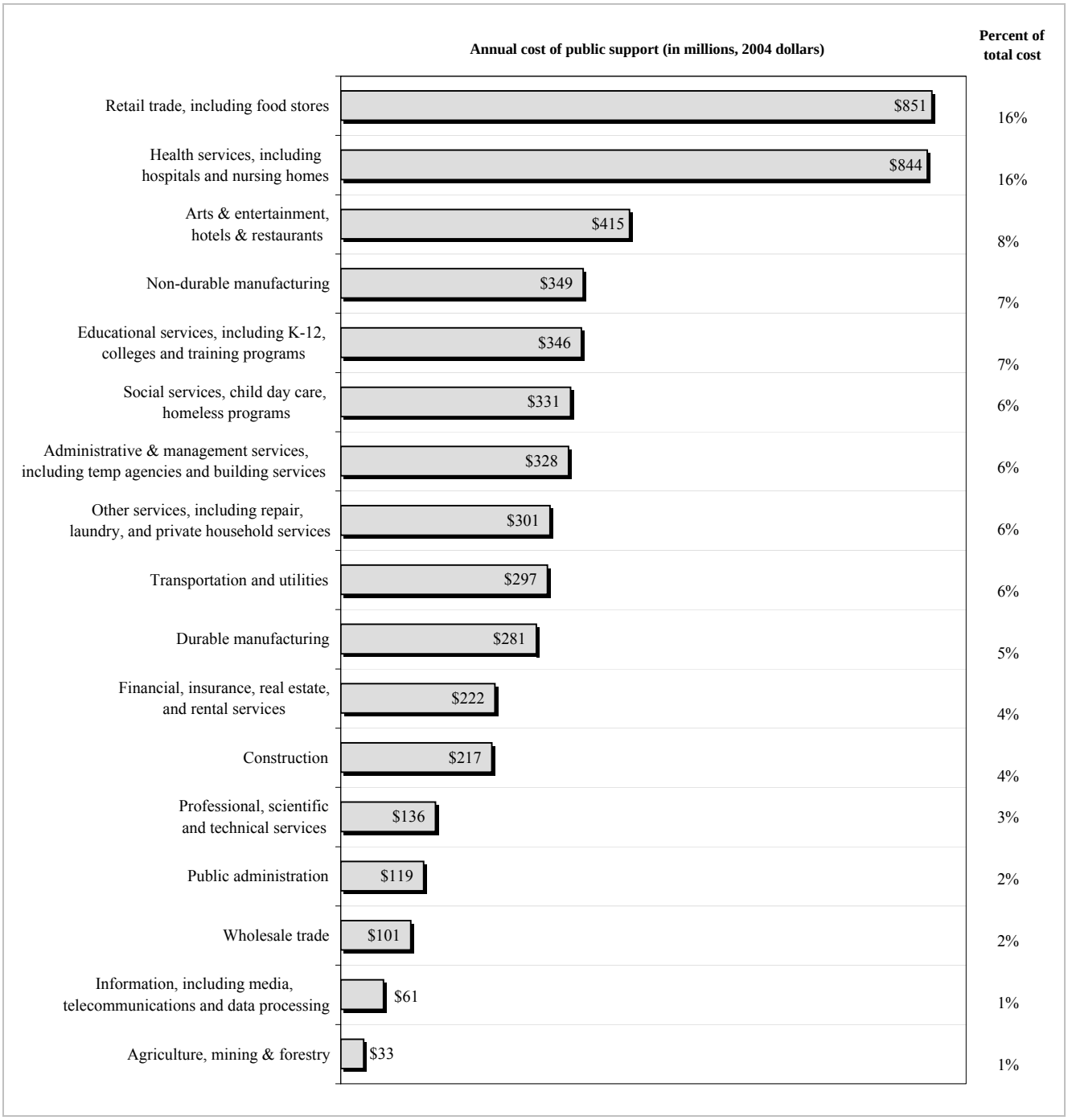
Figures

Figure 1
Program enrollment, by type of enrolled family
Annual averages, 2001-2004



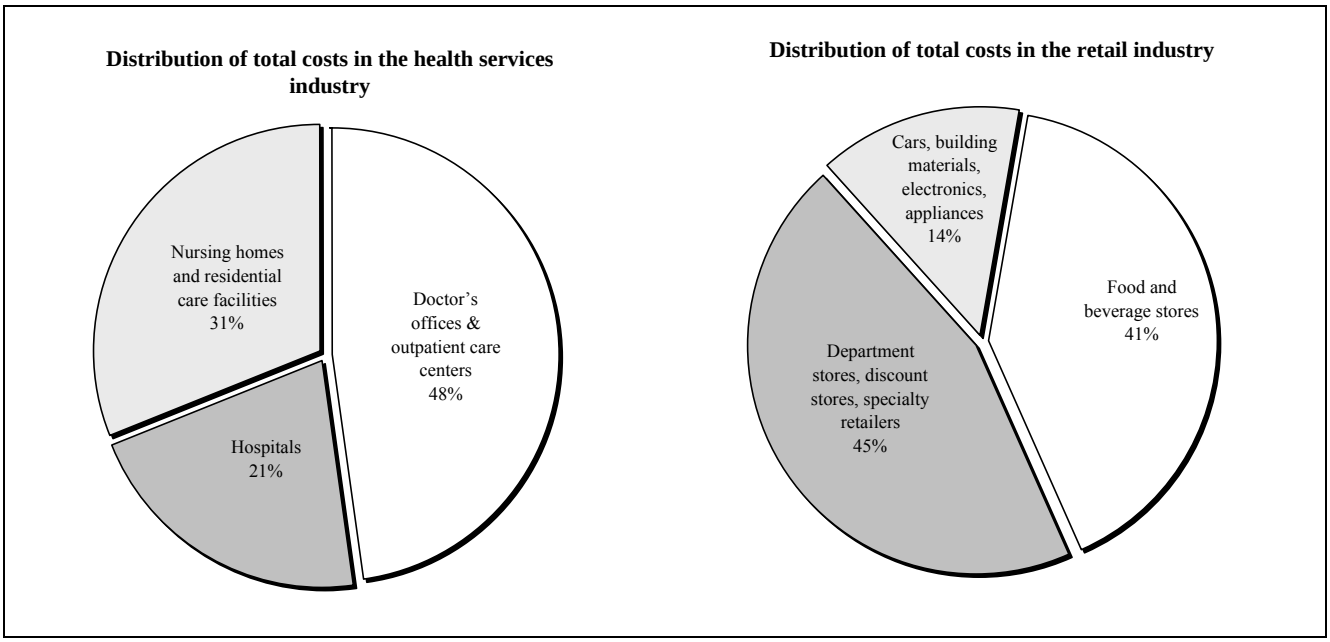
Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Figure 2
Total amount of public support to year-round enrolled workers, by industry
Annual averages, 2001-2004



Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.

Figure 3
Breakdown of public support program costs in health services and retail, by industry segment
Annual averages, 2001-2004



Source: Author's analysis of combined administrative and CPS data.