

Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative

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Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative Response to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's State of the State proposals

By Dr. Leonard Brock, RMAPI executive director

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative is pleased to see the state and Governor Andrew Cuomo taking the lead on poverty-related initiatives through the 2018 State of the State and advancing proposals that reinforce Rochester's own goals to address poverty and its root causes.

We are encouraged by Gov. Andrew Cuomo's proposal to strengthen workforce development through a \$175 million Consolidated Funding Application. The state's goal to support regional talent pipelines aligns perfectly with the efforts of RMAPI's employer working group, a group made up of some of the region's largest employers along with workforce development agencies.

This working group is developing a pilot program to strengthen our local employment talent pipeline through collaboration and feedback with education and job training programs, with a goal to help place 50 low-income individuals in sustainable employment by December 2018.

The state's proposal to overhaul the criminal justice system to ensure fairness for the accused also coincides with one of the recommendations of RMAPI's first progress report. The proposal would reshape the state's antiquated bail system, which has often placed an unfair burden on low-income individuals. We stand behind Gov. Cuomo's proposal to eliminate monetary bail for those facing misdemeanor and non-violent felony charges and promote a re-entry process for individuals transitioning from incarceration back into their communities.

In RMAPI's collective impact model, it takes the effort of numerous stakeholders from across the community working together to achieve our common goals. For this effort to be successful and for RMAPI to achieve systemic change, it will require not only local action but changes on a state level that better address the root causes of poverty and create a more equitable system for all. We are encouraged to see the state taking a lead on these efforts.

For more details on the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative, visit www.uwrochester.org/RMAPI.

For more details on the earlier poverty reports, visit <http://www.racf.org/Reports> or <http://www.ACTRochester.org/Poverty>.