

A HISTORY OF
THE NEW YORK STATE
COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIRECTORS
1966 - 2006

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PREFACE

*Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath he went as usual to the Synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written,
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.”*

Luke 4:16-19

There could be no better description of the mission of Catholic Charities than this passage from Luke.

Through their work in Catholic Charities for over 100 years, priests, religious women, and lay men and women, staff and volunteers alike have sought to bring the good news and hope to poor and vulnerable individuals and families in our state.

They have done so through providing all kinds of direct services in their own Dioceses.

They have also done so by coming together to speak as one voice at the state level for policies that help all individuals achieve their fullest human potential.

Over these last 100 years at the state level, they have done so through the Catholic Welfare Committee, the Catholic Committee, the New York State Catholic Conference, and finally, since 1969, through the State Council of Catholic Charities Directors.

This history of the State Council is written in recognition and appreciation of the contributions of those who have served on the Council and to provide a perspective which can enhance the work of current and future Council members. It is dedicated to all those who have made Catholic Charities what it is in New York. Appendix I provides a list of Diocesan Directors in New York State, as representative of all who have made such wonderful contributions.

Jack Balinsky
Victor, NY
Fall 2006

Special Acknowledgement

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INTRODUCTION

In November 1916, the Bishops of New York State, with Cardinal Farley presiding, established what would become known as the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee. As an incorporated forum/council, the purpose of the Committee was:

- ◆ to consider current legislative problems
- ◆ to formulate legislative policies for the safeguarding and promotion of Catholic interests
- ◆ to effect unity of approach in state-wide legislative and administrative matters
- ◆ to develop harmonious relations between the agencies of the Church and State departments.

The membership of the Committee included representatives from each of the dioceses. Each Ordinary appointed two representatives from each diocese: one priest, the other the diocesan attorney or a competent layman. Bishop Edmund Gibbons, Bishop of Albany, served as the first Chairman and Mr. Charles Tobin, Esq. was named executive secretary.

The Committee dealt with the content of policy as well as with strategies for adoption and implementation of policy issues. The Bishops desired that all legislative matters of general import, including the framing of bills and the promoting or opposing of legislation, should be directed by this committee. The committee met monthly from September to June and spoke and acted only with the approval of the bishops.

In the early years of the Committee, a great deal of emphasis was laid on dependent children's issues and thus the priest delegate from each diocese was the Director of Catholic Charities and the lay delegate was generally the diocesan attorney. As it developed, the Committee also had representation from the Catholic School Superintendents. In the 1930's the Council of School Superintendents designated three members to participate in the deliberations. In the 1940's two representatives from health and hospital activities were added to the Committee. Subsequently, the Conference of Catholic Colleges and Universities, including seminaries, was invited to designate two representatives for membership on the committee. A priest active in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine also served as a delegate. Although the Committee had encouraged the establishment of small, legal-oriented diocesan advisory groups within each diocese, only the work in the New York and Brooklyn Dioceses, which constituted 50% of the Catholic population, proved to be significant.

In November 1968, the Roman Catholic Bishops of New York established the New York State Conference of Catholic Bishops. Its purpose articulated in the Statement of Organization was "the collaboration of the Bishops to promote, by means most appropriate to social conditions existing in this state, the apostolate of the church exercised by the Province and the dioceses it comprises." The New York State Catholic Committee was continued and its purpose was described as "to serve the New York Conference of Bishops in public affairs, including health, education and social service, in which the apostolate of the Church exercised by the dioceses of the State affects or is affected by the circumstances of civil society within this state. The committee's activities include coordination of inter-diocesan efforts in all matters when joint action is desirable." (Article V)

In December 1968, a statement of organization for the Public Policy Committee, successor to the Catholic Welfare Committee was developed and its purpose articulated:

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- ◆ To serve the common good of the people of the State by serving the Bishops of the State in an advisory and consultative capacity;
- ◆ To provide a means for coordinated efforts of the dioceses of New York State in matters of interest and concern in which joint participation is desirable; and
- ◆ To serve as a means through which the Bishops of the State may communicate with respect to public affairs at the State level.

In a footnote, it was noted that the Committee was not:

- ◆ To speak or act as an independent organization;
- ◆ To carry on programs or activities in direct service to people or groups; or
- ◆ To substitute in any respect for the duties and responsibilities of the Ordinaries and of diocesan organizations and agencies.

The membership of this Committee provided for each Ordinary to appoint three regular members (Director of Catholic Charities, Secretary of Education or Superintendent of Schools, and an attorney) and three alternate members, two of which should be laymen. In addition, the Committee invited the following groups to designate a representative and an alternate: The State Council of Confraternity Directors, the Conference of Catholic Colleges and Universities and the Council of Bishops' Hospital Representatives.

THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIRECTORS

As described in the introduction, during most of the period 1916-1966, the State Church organization focused on human service issues, with a special emphasis on issues relating to the care of dependent children.

As times changed, and the membership on the Catholic Committee broadened, the Charities Directors felt the need to have a vehicle to focus together on issues relating to social services provision.

From time to time in the 1950's, an Ad Hoc Committee of Catholic Charities Directors was asked to address particular issues, e.g. adoption, child placement and the like.

In the early 1960's there was created a Standing Committee of the Catholic Charities Directors.

In November 1966, there was formal action to continue and strengthen the role of the Standing Committee.

In 1969, the Standing Committee became the New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS HISTORY

It is the purpose of this history to summarize the work and accomplishments of the Council from the time of formalization of the role of the Standing Committee of Catholic Charities Directors in 1966 until June 2006. There are many different ways in which such a history could be organized. The author chooses to organize this document in relation to the tenure of the various Executive Secretaries of the Council.

Certainly, there were many influences over this time frame on the work of the Council:

- ◆ who were the Ordinaries in the State and what was their interest in the State Catholic Conference;
- ◆ the personality and priorities of the Cardinal Archbishop of New York, the Bishop of Albany serving as Chairperson of the Public Policy Committee, and the Executive Director of the State Catholic Conference;
- ◆ the abilities, interests and participation of the various members of the Council;
- ◆ the attitude and leadership of various administrations in state government;
- ◆ the overall economic environment
- ◆ societal attitude to the poor and vulnerable.

Nonetheless, it is contended that here, as with many geographically disparate organizations, it is the work of the full-time on-site staff person which is most determinative of the focus and accomplishments of the Council.

In organizing the history in this fashion, and entitling each section with a descriptive focus, it is of course recognized that in each time frame, the Council attended to many different aspects of activity. The titling is merely a means of highlighting the major emphasis of activity at that time.

These, then are the chapters of this history.

<u>Years</u>	<u>Executive Secretary</u>	<u>Descriptive Title</u>
1966-1969	Catholic Charities Committee	Getting Started
1969-1972	John Szulgit	Getting Organized
1972-1980	Jim Cashen I	Broadening the Agenda
1980-1984	Jim Cashen II	Creating Committees
1984-1990	Jack Balinsky	The Committee Era
1990-1998	Joe Buttigieg	Focus on Economic Security
1998-2001	David Hamilton	Transition
2002-2006	Earl Eichelberger	Getting it all Together

In this shorter version of a more comprehensive history published in 2004, each chapter is organized into three sections: membership, overview of activities and public policy advocacy.

CHAPTER ONE

COMMITTEE OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIRECTORS 1966 – 1969 – GETTING STARTED

A. Membership

Monsignor Mugavero served as Chairperson of the Committee from its inception in 1966 until January 1969, when Monsignor Mulcahy from Rochester was elected as Chairperson and Monsignor Head from New York was elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Members of the Council during this time period included:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor Ed Head, Father Jim Murray, Dorothy Coyle (1969-) Father John Ahern

Albany: Father Jack Sise, Father Richard Downs

Brooklyn: Monsignor Frank Mugavero, Father Joseph Sullivan, Mildred Shanley

Buffalo: Monsignor Jack Conniff, Father Bill Zenns, Father Bob Williamson

Ogdensburg: Monsignor Bob Lawler

Rochester: Monsignor Don Mulcahy,

Rockville Center: Monsignor Jerry Ryan, Father Emmet Fagan, Father Frank Santagata

Syracuse: Monsignor Charles Fahey, Father Jack McCrea, Harry Honan

While he was never a member of the Standing Committee or the Council, Charles J. Tobin, Jr. exerted enormous influence on its work and its members. In 1954, Charles was appointed Executive Secretary of the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee, following in the footsteps of his Father, Charles Senior who was the founding Executive Secretary in 1916. It had been said of Monsignor John O’Grady at the federal level, that no piece of child welfare legislation was passed by Congress over a thirty year period from 1910-1940 without his imprimatur. In similar fashion, both Tobins exerted enormous influence on social welfare programs in New York State. In particular, Charles Jr. had a relationship with leadership in the Rockefeller administration and state legislature at that time that was of great benefit to the Catholic Church in the state.

Whether working with the Bishops, the Catholic Committee or the Charities Directors, Charles was an “enabler”, not a “Director”. As several of his colleagues commented, he often knew what the right approach was or the answer was, but rather than telling them, by a skillful, indirect approach, he would lead those involved to themselves come to the same conclusion he had in mind from the beginning.

Charles also served as a mentor and advisor to those Catholic Charities Directors appointed in the 1960’s and the 1970’s. Among many other involvements, he helped create the decentralized Catholic Charities governance structure enjoyed in the Dioceses of Albany, Syracuse and Rochester.

Much of what is written in this history would not have been possible without the foundation created by Charles J. Tobin, Jr.

B. Overview of Activities

At its November 29, 1966 meeting, the Standing Committee of Catholic Charities Directors agreed upon a series of measures to strengthen the work of the Standing Committee. Despite the fact that the Charities Directors had met previously as an Ad Hoc Committee or Standing Committee within the structure of the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee, the decisions made at this November meeting marked the formal creation of what has come to be the New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors.

Over the ensuing three years several other steps were taken toward strengthening of the Council. After a failed attempt to obtain staff for the Council in 1967, at the October 25, 1968 meeting, there was agreement to create a structure similar to the recently created Council of Catholic School Superintendents, with a staff person to focus on issues relating to Catholic Charities and Catholic healthcare. At the February 7, 1969 meeting, there was agreement the Council would be a substructure of the State Catholic Committee, with an Executive Secretary who would have a coordinating and monitoring role, for whom the Directors would proportionally contribute \$40,000. Charles Tobin reported at the April 17, 1969 meeting that the Bishops had approved the proposed structure and budget, and the Council determined to begin advertising the Executive Secretary position.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council was concerned with the following major issues:

- The Constitutional Convention
- Abortion
- Child welfare matters (including adoptions and day care)
- Income Security Issues (including standard of need and welfare reform)
- Health issues (including Article 28 A legislation)
- Federal issues (including social security)

CHAPTER TWO

JOHN SZULGIT 1969-1972 – GETTING ORGANIZED

A. Membership

Monsignor Ed Head was elected Chairperson of the Council on January 15, 1970, replacing Monsignor Don Mulcahy. In turn, Father Joe Sullivan was elected Chair on September 15, 1971, and Monsignor Fahey Vice-Chair. On July 1, 1972, Monsignor Fahey and Father Emmet Fagan were elected as Chair and Co-Chair for a three-year term.

Council members during this time period were:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor Ed Head, Monsignor Jim Murray, Monsignor William Toohy, Father John Ahern, Father Bob Arpie, Dorothy Coyle.

Albany: Father Richard Downs

Brooklyn: Father Joseph Sullivan, Mildred Shanley

Buffalo: Monsignor Jack Conniff, Father Phil Jarmac

Ogdensburg: Monsignor Robert Lawler, Father Pat Mundy

Rochester: Monsignor Don Mulcahy (-1971), Father William Charbonneau, Father Tim Weider

Rockville Center: Father Emmet Fagan, Father Ed Molloy, Joe Barbaro

Syracuse: Father Charles Fahey, Father Jack McCrea, Harry Honan, Monsignor Robert Davern (1971)

B. Overview of Activities

Much of the focus for the newly created Council for this three year period was on the organization of the Council and the relationship of the Council to its various constituencies.

John Szulgit was hired as Council Executive Secretary effective September 15, 1969. John was a social worker from the Lackawanna area, who had a Masters Degree in social work from Fordham and was working on a Doctorate at Syracuse University. John was to work until 1972, when because of a tragic death in his family, he was forced to return to Rochester to run the family business.

At his first meeting, held on October 9, 1969, it was agreed that he should seek to become affiliated with a wide variety of groups, that the Charities Directors would decide which substantive issues he should address, and that the office would serve as a focal point for information about regulation and legislation.

Some confusion about his evolving role led to a planning session held on July 1, 1970 at which it was agreed that the purposes of the Council were:

1. to keep membership informed about internal and public developments in health and welfare policy, services and administration
2. to participate with public and private welfare organizations
3. to react to issues and policies
4. to provide leadership for new directions
5. to share information and review existing programs and policies

6. act in unison with the Catholic Committee

Membership of the Council was to include the eight Diocesan Directors and up to two other staff from each Diocese who worked closely with the Director.

While this mission statement helped focus the work of the Council, there was also much discussion during this period about the relationship of the Council to other entities.

The Council was much involved with the National Conference of Catholic Charities. It had considerable representation on the Cadre Committee established to write a new mission statement for Catholic Charities, and significantly influenced the final Cadre Report adopted at the 1972 Miami meeting, which articulated as the Catholic Charities mission:

- the continuing provision of quality direct services
- advocacy to transform the social order
- convening, especially calling to action local faith communities to address community needs

The Council also addressed issues relating to the role of Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies, and the role of Church in society.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council was concerned with the following major issues.

- Federal issues (including the Nixon Family Assistance Plan and Comprehensive Child Development Act)
- State income security issues (including a meeting with Governor Rockefeller)
- Health issues (Medicare)
- Housing issues (bond funding)
- Service delivery priorities (including adoption, special education, drug issues, Title XX)

CHAPTER THREE

JIM CASHEN 1972-1980 – BROADENING THE REACH

A. Membership

This time period began with Monsignor Fahey serving as Chair and Father Fagan as Co-Chair. In April 1974, Father Fagan was elected as Chair and Monsignor Lawler was elected as Vice-Chair. In April 1976, Harry Honan was elected as Chairperson with Monsignor Murray serving as Vice-Chairperson. In 1978 Monsignor Murray was elected as Chairperson and Father Charlie Mulligan was elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Membership during this time period included:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor James Murray, Dorothy Coyle

Albany: Father Richard Downs (-1974), Sister Serena Branson (1974-)

Brooklyn: Father Joseph Sullivan, Mildred Shanley, Tom DeStefano (1979-)

Buffalo: Father William Charbonneau (-1973), Monsignor Jack Conniff, Monsignor Henry Gugino (1976 -)

Ogdensburg: Monsignor Bob Lawler, Al Velto (1974 -)

Rochester: Father Joe D'Aurizio (1973-1977), Father Charlie Mulligan (1977-), Maurice Tierney (1978-)

Rockville Center: Father Emmet Fagan, Father Dick Dina, Joe Barbaro (1976-)

Syracuse: Monsignor Charles Fahey, Harry Honan (-1977), Jack Balinsky (1977-)

B. Overview of Activities

Jim Cashen was the right person at the right time at the right place to spur the growth and effectiveness of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors. An attorney by profession, he had been working as a Grants Officer at the United Hospital Fund in New York City. With a change in leadership there, he had decided it was time to move on. Raised in the Catholic faith, and committed to the social justice Gospel, Jim came upon Father Bob Fox, a street priest from Harlem who had become a leader in the National Catholic Charities movement. Through Bob, Jim came to know Charlie Fahey and Emmet Fagan and was hired as an Executive Secretary of the Council in March 1973. Jim's outgoing nature, intelligence and passion for social justice were to stand the Council in good stead for the next eleven years. Through his efforts, the reach of the Council was broadened considerably, both in terms of connectedness made and issues addressed.

During this time period, both in the nine months before Jim was hired, and subsequent to his hiring, the Council continued to devote considerable attention to its own internal development.

The results of two years of discussion and a special planning session held in Rochester on July 1 and 2, 1975 was agreement that the purposes of the State Council of Catholic Charities Directors would be as follows:

- ❖ To provide a forum by which Catholic Charities organizations, sharing the vision and social mission of the Church, may join together at the state level to:

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- Inter-relate with government and voluntary organizations
- Contribute to the development of public and Church policy
- Be responsive to human service needs which are inter-Diocesan in nature
- Experience the mutual support of the group
- Offer opportunities for leadership and program development

Following on this session the Council began to adopt annual program plans. The 1976-1977 plan was representative of those adopted during the late 1970's. It outlined the following priorities:

1. Legislation
 - Temporary Commission to Revise the Social Services Law
 - Senator Pisani bills on Child Care
 - Mental Health issues
2. Two convenings planned
3. Continued relationship with state agencies
4. Liaison activities
 - State Coalition for Criminal Justice
 - State Health and Welfare Council
 - State Council of Voluntary Child-Caring Agencies
 - State Council of Churches

A significant accomplishment of the Council during the first part of Jim Cashen's tenure was to broaden the agenda both in terms of contacts made and also substantive areas addressed (these latter items will be discussed in the next section of this chapter).

The Council increased its connectedness with government by sponsoring an Annual Health and Welfare Dinner in December to which top state government leaders were invited and by holding a series of individual meetings with state government leaders, including Governor Carey, Social Services Commissioners Abe Levine (Rockefeller administration), Stephen Berger (Carey administration), and Barbara Blum (Carey administration).

The Council sought to work more proactively with the human services advocacy community, including such organizations as the State Health and Welfare Coalition, the State Council of Voluntary Child Caring agencies, and the State Coalition for Criminal Justice.

The Council also worked to enhance connectedness in the Church through participation in regional Bishop's meetings and meetings with the State Catholic Conference Task Force on Urban Policy, as well as youth ministry representatives.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council was concerned with the following major issues:

- Federal issues (including the newly created Commodity Distribution program)
- State income security issues (including the work of the Temporary Commission to Revise the Social Services Law and the role of the State Board of Social Welfare)

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- Child care issues (including termination of parental rights, PINS cases, child abuse and family planning for children in foster care)

During this time, the Council also broadened the focus of its agenda in recognition of the rapidly growing specialization in human services and the expanding role of Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies in service delivery and policy advocacy. Issues addressed for the first time or in an expanded way included:

- Life issues (at both the federal and state level)
- Aging issues (including a June 1976 statewide convening)
- Health issues (including relationship with the newly established State Catholic Hospital Council in 1980)
- Mental hygiene issues (especially in light of the Willowbrook Consent decree)
- Housing issues (including a 1975 Bishops' statement on affordable housing and the establishment in 1978 of the Statewide Rural Housing Coalition)
- Criminal justice issues (including facilitating the establishment of the State Catholic Conference Criminal Justice Advisory Committee)
- Refugee and immigration issues (particularly with regard to Indochinese unaccompanied minors)
- Teen pregnancy issues (including participation in a State Catholic Conference Ad Hoc Committee on programs and services for pregnant women created in 1978)
- Social justice advocacy (including federal and state convenings)

CHAPTER FOUR

JIM CASHEN 1980-1984 – CREATING COMMITTEES

A. Membership

Father Charlie Mulligan served as Chairperson from 1980-1982, and Sister Serena Branson served as Chairperson from 1982-1984.

Members during this time period included:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor James Murray, Dorothy Coyle
Albany: Sister Serena Branson
Brooklyn: Bishop Joseph Sullivan, Tom DeStefano, Mildred Shanley
Buffalo: Monsignor John Conniff, Monsignor Henry Gugino
Ogdensburg: Monsignor Robert Lawler
Rochester: Father Charles Mulligan, Maurice Tierney
Rockville Center: Monsignor Emmet Fagan, Joe Barbaro
Syracuse: Monsignor Charles Fahey, Jack Balinsky

For twenty years, from about 1965-1985, the work of Catholic Charities was blessed by the leadership of outstanding individuals from each of the Dioceses, most of whom were present for much of the time.

Working from south to north and west:

- Monsignor Emmet Fagan was in many ways the glue that held the group together, drawing on his professional social work expertise, and his willingness to serve as facilitator for National Conference of Catholic Charities activities as well as state activities.
- Monsignor James Murray brought a keen intelligence and his professional training as a lawyer to the work of the Council. Within his Diocese, he was known as “the Billion Dollar” man, given his responsibility for nursing homes. He was also throughout the years a strong advocate for Irish immigrants.
- Like Monsignor Bill Toohy before her, and Vinnie DeFazio after her, Dorothy Coyle made significant contributions to the Council, especially in review of legislation, in her Council tenure from 1969-1984.
- At a meeting about day care in the mid 1950’s, representatives from Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese asked Monsignor Mugavaro who was the “brash young kid” he had brought with him. So began the leadership career of Bishop Joseph Sullivan, who helped the State Council and national organization to understand the mission of Catholic Charities in changing times. He later held many leadership positions in Catholic health and social welfare activity, and was for many years the USCC liaison to the national organization.
- Tom DeStefano who was appointed Diocesan Director in Brooklyn in 1979 represented the coming to the Council of a person who had not only a faith-filled love of the Church, but also a tough professional managerial/social work approach. He was a person who knew programs and had great political acumen.

- One of the first women to integrate the Fort Orange Club in Albany (at a Catholic Committee Dinner), Mildred Shanley was the backbone of the legislative work of the Council from its inception until she joined the staff of the Catholic Medical Center in 1992. She had provided assistance to Charles Tobin during the 1967 Constitutional Convention, and was a leader in developing policy and program initiatives.
- Like the Bishop of Albany, the Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities in Albany plays a special role with state government. No one was better suited for this position than Sister Serena Branson, who came to Albany in 1974 as the first woman Director of Catholic Charities in the country, after a long and distinguished career, which included developing the Astor Home and Kennedy Center. Especially in her relationships to Governor and Mrs. Cuomo and her beloved Health Commissioner David Alexrod, she gave the Council broad access to state government. She also played a unique leadership role with other members of the Council.
- Monsignor Charles Fahey was and is a visionary. His colleagues have said of him, if you wanted to know in broad-brush strokes where society would be in twenty-five years, and how it would get there, there was no better counselor than Charlie. He, too, played a major role in helping Catholic Charities at the state and national level to respond to changing times. He was a visionary also in helping the Church to address the needs of elderly, including aging priests and religious.
- Monsignor Ron Bill became Diocesan Director in Syracuse in 1979. He had been the regional Director in the Southern Tier, and had been responsible for Catholic Charities taking the lead role in providing community-based mental health services in Broome County. He also served as a Chaplain in the Armed Forces, ultimately rising to the rank of general. He was to serve as Council Chairperson from 1984-1987.
- Monsignor Bob Lawler of Ogdensburg was a prince and a gentleman. His recruiting and support of Al Velto was critical to enabling the Council to play a leading role in housing advocacy in New York State.
- Father Charlie Mulligan came somewhat later into the Council, appointed to his position in 1977. Initially reluctant to participate, when he came “on board”, he provided significant leadership in further organizing and focusing the work of the Council, and in urging the national Catholic Charities family to integrate service and advocacy activities.
- “In for a penny, in for a pound” described the loyalty to the Council of Monsignor John Conniff. He was always a supporter of Council discussions, and brought significant credibility to his own agency, but also the Catholic Charities movement through his always successful fund drives. He was most entertaining at dinner, often joining Joe Sullivan and Emmet Fagan in song, and bringing to the Council “the Ballad of Sigmund Freud”. (see Appendix II) Tom DeStefano remarked in summing up his experiences with the Council, “It was the dinners that made it such a wonderful experience”.

Over the years, the Council was blessed with many outstanding leaders whose contributions are chronicled elsewhere in this history, but at no other times in its history did the Council benefit from the consistent leadership presence of individuals like these. They gained support from one another, especially at the dinners. But they also individually and collectively made a significant difference in helping guide Catholic Charities at the state and national level through most challenging times.

No discussion of the work of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors would be complete without mention of Bishop Howard Hubbard of Albany. A native of Troy, Father Hubbard had worked as a “street priest” in the south end of Albany and was the founder of the Hope House drug treatment agency. With what some felt was behind the scenes assistance from Sister Serena, he was appointed Bishop of Albany in 1977.

Like the Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities in Albany, the Bishop of Albany plays a special role in the relationship of Church and state government and in Catholic Conference advocacy. Perhaps there could have been no better person to play such an influential role over these last thirty years. Driven by the mission of the Church, Bishop Hubbard has been a tireless advocate for the poor and vulnerable. With great political acumen, he has navigated successfully the challenging waters of Church-State interaction. As Chairperson of the Public Policy Committee he has been a force for unity within the Church of the State, as well as a leader in the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Cardinal O’Connor well described his approach: “iron fist in velvet glove”.

Over the years, Bishop Hubbard has spoken in an articulate, forceful and reasoned way on many issues, too numerous to mention here. Perhaps most notable has been his advocacy against the death penalty. He has often stated publicly that when those who follow us 100 years from now look back and ask where was the voice of the Church on this barbaric practice (as many now question the role of the Church in relation to the holocaust), he wants the Church voice to be on record “loud and clear”. Through his efforts the voice of the Church has been heard “loud and clear” on the death penalty, and on many other matters affecting the poor and vulnerable. His work has significantly enhanced the effectiveness of the Council.

B. Overview of Activities

The Council had made considerable progress in organizing itself and focusing its agenda during the 1970’s. Further progress was made beginning in 1980 with the election of Father Charlie Mulligan as Chairperson. The Council Program Plan was developed in significantly more detail. Focus on various issue areas was more intense and focused, and led to the creation of Council standing committees.

An important factor in the evolution of the Council in this time period was the hiring of Alan Davitt as Executive Director of the State Catholic Conference.

Alan had graduated from Woodstock College, earned a Master’s Degree from Canisius, and was studying for a Doctorate at the University of Buffalo. He had married a wonderful woman Mary, and was working for the Buffalo Catholic School System, where he rose to the position of Assistant Superintendent. Having become familiar with the work of the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee and the work of the School Superintendents, Alan made a proposal that there be created the position of Executive Secretary to the Council of Catholic School Superintendents. He was hired, and began a long and distinguished career with the Catholic Conference. Having ably served the Superintendents, Alan became Executive Director of the Catholic Conference in 1979, and Charles Tobin became General Counsel to the Conference.

Alan brought many skills to this leadership position. He understood well the functioning of Diocesan Church and the Bishops’ Conference. He enjoyed the full support of Cardinals Cooke and O’Connor.

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While the initially separate offices of Charles Tobin, the schools and Catholic Charities offices had come together in location some years before, Alan's leadership and administrative skill were to effectuate the full integration of all these efforts under the Catholic Conference, and enable it to continue to be an effective voice with state government. His focused leadership was also a significant factor in helping the Council to become more organized in its work.

Illustrative of the work of the Council during this time period were the priorities adopted in the 1983-1984 Council program plan.

- 1.) Issues of Major Public Debate
 - Public Assistance
 - Homelessness
- 2.) Specific Policy Issues
 - Housing
 - Citizen Participation
 - Alternatives to Incarceration
- 3.) Convenings
 - Statewide Catholic Charities
 - Medicaid
 - Employment
- 4.) Major Ongoing Issues
 - SENSES
 - Teen Pregnancy
 - Mental Retardation
 - Mental Illness
- 5.) Relationships
 - Through Committees

During this time period, the Council also established four standing groups to help it focus on specific areas of concern. Thus was created the Committee Era. The first four committees established were: Aging (1980), Mental Retardation (1982), Mental Health (1982), and Housing (1983).

In May 1982, the Council convened in Valatie its first statewide annual convening, bringing together top leadership from the eight Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies for education and inspiration.

It was perhaps symbolic of the fact that under Jim Cashen's leadership, the Council had "come of age", that one of the very last accomplishments during his tenure was publication of a Council brochure. The following section from the brochure will describe the status of the Council at that time.

2. The Council's Functions

The Council has two primary functions: policy development and service delivery enhancement.

A. Policy Development

Specifically the Directors:

**Review existing and proposed legislation, regulations and policy directives relating to the operations of Catholic Charities agencies.*

**Carry out detailed analysis and research where necessary to fully understand the ramifications of policy directions; and*

**Meet with key government officials and human services professionals.*

On the basis of this information, the Directors then develop appropriate public policy recommendations. In a related function, the Council makes recommendations to the Governor and legislative leadership concerning appointments to advisory committees and public service offices.

B. Service Delivery Enhancement

The Council works to enhance the service delivery capabilities of individual diocesan agencies by:

**Allowing for the sharing of program information at the Director's level*

**Monitoring developments in service delivery areas;*

**Appointing committees on areas of common interest (e.g. employment, housing, mental health) to meet on a regular basis, which allow Catholic Charities agency employees the opportunity to discuss common problems at the local diocesan level, share program activities and knowledge, conduct staff analysis, meet with government officials, organize convenings on their functional areas of concern, and develop policy recommendations to Charities directors;*

**Convening a statewide conference on an annual basis, modeled after the NCCC annual meeting at the national level, to educate staff and provide a forum for broad discussion of policy issues.*

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council was concerned with the following major issues.

- Public assistance (including the successful work of the State Coalition for Fair Public Assistance to gain a basic grant increase in 1981)
- Federal issues (including Welfare Reform Title, XX, foster care and housing and working with SENSES)
- Migrant labor issues
- Refugee issues (particularly Haitian refugees)
- Revenue issues (including advocating for the 1983 establishment by the State Catholic Conference of the Advisory Committee on Government Fiscal Affairs)
- Block Grant Advisory Committees
- Aging issues (including advocacy for establishment of a Catholic Conference Commission on the Elderly)
- Housing issues (including the major accomplishment of the 1982 enactment of the Rural Rental Assistance bill providing \$7.6 million in rental assistance for projects developed through the Farmer's Home Section 515 program)
- Mental retardation issues (including conversion of community residences to ICF's as a way to draw down federal Medicaid funds)
- Mental health issues (including the 1980 publication of a New York State Catholic Conference Statement on the Care and Treatment of those Suffering from Mental Illness.)

CHAPTER FIVE

JACK BALINSKY 1984 – 1990 - THE COMMITTEE ERA

A. Membership

There were three important aspects of the membership of the Council during this time period.

1. Leadership

Continuing the legacy of Charlie Mulligan's leadership, the Chairperson of the Council played a much stronger role in directing the activities of the Council than in the past. The Council was blessed to have the leadership of Monsignor Ron Bill, Diocesan Director from Syracuse from 1984-1987, and then Father Steve Gratto, Diocesan Director from Ogdensburg from 1987-1990.

2. Stability of Membership

On July 1, 1984, the Council membership by Diocese was:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor Jim Murray, Father Jerry Walsh, Vinnie DeFazio.
Albany Diocese: Sister Serena Branson, John Rutnik
Brooklyn Diocese: Tom DeStefano, Peter DellaMonica, Mildred Shanley
Buffalo Diocese: Monsignor John Conniff
Ogdensburg: Monsignor Bob Lawler
Rochester: Father Charles Mulligan, Maurice Tierney
Rockville Center: Joe Kowalchik, Father John Gilmartin, Monsignor Alan Placa
Syracuse: Monsignor Ron Bill, Brian Walton

During this six-year period, only these few changes occurred:

In 1995 Father Steve Gratto replaced Monsignor Lawler as Diocesan Director in Ogdensburg, and joined the Council.

He was to make significant contributions to the Council as Chairperson of the Rural Issues Committee and Council Chairperson from 1987-1990.

After the brief two-year tenure of Joe Kowalchik, Father John Gilmartin became Diocesan Director in Rockville Center in 1985. He brought an extensive background in parish social ministry, and was to become a strong advocate for this ministry at the state and national level. He served as Council chair from 1991-1993 and would later serve as a member of the Catholic Charities USA Vision 2000 Task Force.

Through a three-year plan created by Bishop Clark and Father Mulligan in Rochester, Father John Firpo became Diocesan Director in 1985, after two years at Catholic University and a year in transition. In his Council tenure, including his service as chairperson from 1990-1991, he was a strong advocate for providing time for Council members to share and discuss common practical experiences.

Father Bob Stephenson became Diocesan Director in Syracuse in 1987. Through his close rapport with Bishop O'Keefe, he helped the Council remain connected with the thinking of the Bishops in the state.

3. Fine-Tuning

During the last three years of this time period, the Council made three minor changes with regard to its way of doing business. The genesis of each of the changes was a feeling on the part of some Directors, particularly the three new Diocesan Directors, that the agendas for meetings were too overwhelming and there was need for more time for sharing. The changes were:

- beginning in September 1987, when Father Gratto became Chairperson, the Executive Secretary was to develop and send in advance with the meeting materials a written Executive Secretary's report, updating Council members particularly on the work of the committees, as way of cutting down agenda time at the meeting. This process seemed to work well with opportunity provided at the beginning of the meeting for questions Council members might have about the written reports.
- at that same meeting, it was agreed under the leadership of John Gilmartin, that the Council would give over 15 percent of the time at each meeting to discuss "programs, policies and issues" faced in common by Charities Agencies.

One important such discussion was held at the Council meeting on December 3, 1989, led by Monsignor Henry Gugino who was Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Directors of the National Conference of Catholic Charities Directors. The Council addressed the changing nature of the national organization, now known as Catholic Charities USA. From this discussion the Council urged continuing focus on advocacy by the national organization.

- at a special meeting of the Diocesan Directors held in New York City on September 8th and 9th, 1989, it was agreed that Council membership would henceforth be limited to Diocesan Directors and the Legal Committee (DeFazio, Placa, Shanley), providing the Diocesan Directors more opportunity for discussion and interaction.

With regard to Council staffing, Jim Cashen announced in February 1984 that he was resigning to become a Commissioner of the New York State Commission on Quality Care. The Council appointed a Search Committee comprised of Sister Serena, Tom DeStefano and Charlie Mulligan to work with Alan Davitt to hire a replacement. It seemed that Jack Balinsky was a natural candidate for the position, since he had been a member of the Council since 1977 and had had statewide advocacy experience for the previous four years as Director of the Statewide Coalition for Fair Public Assistance from 1980-1981, and Statewide Coordinator of the successor organization SENSES from 1981-1984, both positions held on a part-time basis while he continued his role as Director of Syracuse Area Catholic Charities. With some last minute assistance from Monsignor Conniff and Bishop Head, Jack was hired by Alan Davitt to begin work formally on July 1, 1984.

B. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The work of the Council during this time period can best be described by reporting on the annual events sponsored by the Council and the work of the council committees, in this, its Committee Era.

1. Annual Events

Various annual events sponsored by the Council were continued, created and/or strengthened, including:

a. Annual Convenings

Six annual convenings were held in this timeframe:

- 1985 – Rockville Centre
- 1986 – Buffalo
- 1987 – Rochester
- 1988 – Alexandria Bay
- 1989 – Albany
- 1990 – Albany

Documents from the planning process for the Rochester convening give a sense of the purposes of these convenings:

1. to provide key leadership staff throughout the state with an opportunity to learn about, discuss and think about the Catholic Charities mission at a national, state and local level.
2. to be an occasion at which each committee can both have a business meeting and also participate in a session designed to broaden its horizons.
3. to provide an opportunity to review the proposed Catholic Charities USA policy statement and prepare in other ways for the upcoming national conference.

Particularly with regard to the second purpose, each of the committees was charged with making a presentation to the group as a whole which would include:

1. major social policy issues which the committee is addressing
2. how the efforts of the committee might link with the work of the Council
3. how the work of the committee fit in with the overall mission of the Catholic Conference.
4. suggested follow-up action steps

b. Annual Human Services Reception

The Council had made the decision in early 1981 to transform the Annual Health and Human Services dinner into an annual reception.

From 1982 to 1987 this reception was held at the Chancery in Albany on the Wednesday night of the December Charities/Public Policy meeting week.

Because of a gradual decline in participation by government officials through the 1980's, concern was expressed after the 1987 event that a new format should be developed.

The Council therefore decided to conjoin the reception with the Statewide Annual Convening beginning in 1989. Participation was excellent in the 1989 and 1990 events, particularly because Governor Cuomo was present at the 1989 event. The Council gave Bishop Frank Mugavero an award for his lifetime of contributions to Catholic Charities. Thus was born the Bishop Mugavero Award, which was conferred on Sister Serena at the 1990 reception. Appendix III lists those persons on whom the Council has conferred the Bishop Mugavero Award since 1989.

c. Congressional Delegation Meetings

Based upon previous experiences in 1978 and 1981, the Council made a decision, given the impact of the Reagan administration and the focus on economic security priorities, to organize meetings periodically with the New York State Congressional Delegation. In one format or another, meetings were held in February 1985, March 1986, March 1988 and September 1989.

2. Committees

a. Introduction

A major focus of the work of the Council during this time period was the continuation of existing committees, the creation of new committees, and the enhancement of the effectiveness of all the committees.

There were four committees whose primary function was internal, to be of support to the Council and Catholic Charities Directors in the work in their Dioceses. They were: Fiscal Officers, Futures Committee, Legal Committee and Social Action Planning Committee.

The following committees were focused on public policy advocacy, as well as sharing of program information and insights: Drug and Alcohol, Elderly Services, Family and Children Services, Housing, Legalization, Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Public Assistance and Rural Issues.

For these committees, while there were obviously individual differences in activity, there were standard approaches taken on an annual basis:

- meetings with appropriate Executive branch leaders, especially in the fall to discuss departmental budget recommendations which had been developed by the respective committees in May.
- review of the Governor's proposed budget and development of budget recommendations for meeting with appropriate legislative committees and for inclusion in annual Catholic Conference Omnibus Budget letter (first such letter sent March 1987)
- development of departmental budget recommendations in May
- preparation for and participation in spring Statewide Annual Convening
- addressing policy issues specific to the functional area of concern to the committee
- completing in May an annual committee evaluation

- and, throughout, agenda time for sharing issues and concerns about programs and practices

b. Internal Support Committees

The Fiscal Officers Committee established in April 1986, focused on contracts management and salary and benefit issues.

The Futures Committee, established in February 1987 to enable the Council to anticipate what would be the major issues of public policy debate, sponsored two Futures Convenings at Fordham, one in November 1987 featuring Art Webb from OMRDD and Monsignor Charles Fahey from Fordham, and the other one in February 1990 featuring Father Avery Dulles and Jack Balinsky.

The Legal Committee, established in November 1984, advocated for creation of a national Catholic Charities Attorney Association, provided support on a variety of legal issues, and, in the fall of 1988, organized three management training sessions on legal issues for Catholic Charities leadership staff.

The Social Action Planning Committee, established in November 1985, worked on ways to help the Charities Directors integrate advocacy into their ongoing work.

c. Policy Oriented Committees

The Drug and Alcohol Committee, established in September 1986, focused on advocating internally within the Church to educate leadership about drug and alcohol issues and to call the Church to action, culminating with a presentation of a comprehensive statement on ways the Church could become involved at the 1989 Statewide Annual Convening. The Committee also contributed significantly to the development of the subsequent State Bishops' Pastoral on Chemical Dependency.

The Elderly Services Committee, established in May 1986, was born out of the work of the New York State Catholic Conference Commission on the Elderly, and organized a conference in March 1987 to review the Final Report of the Commission and a "parish how to" manual the Commission had developed.

The Family and Children Services Committee, established in September 1984, contributed to the development of the Catholic Conference Omnibus Youth Services Bill proposal in 1986, and focused on the Child Welfare Reform Act in New York State, private adoptions, and aftercare/independent living issues.

The Housing Committee, established in May 1983, was instrumental in the establishment of the Homeless Housing Assistance Program, the Housing Trust Fund and the Affordable Housing Program which are still today (now along with Low Income Housing Investment Tax Credits) the major engines of low income housing development in New York State.

The Legalization Committee, established in May 1987, developed a paper for the Council in the fall of 1987 which put forward recommendations for direct service activities by

Charities agencies, and recommendations on immigration policy reform at the state and national levels, and also sponsored convenings over the next three years to consider these recommendations.

The Mental Health Committee, established in May 1982, helped the Council to continue to play a major role in service delivery, education and advocacy for persons with mental illness in the wake of deinstitutionalization started in the 1970's.

The Committee on Mentally Retarded Persons, established in May 1982, especially through the leadership of its Chairperson Monsignor Thomas Cribbin of Brooklyn, had much influence in the development of the system of community-based services for mentally retarded and developmentally disabled persons in New York State.

The Public Assistance Committee was created in 1989 as the focal point of advocacy for a further increase in the basic grant.

The Rural Issues Committee, established in September 1984 in response to the work of the State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, developed recommendations to that body on all facets of life in rural New York State, and sponsored two major convenings in Syracuse in fall 1985 and fall 1986 bringing together those involved in Catholic Charities around the state involved in rural service delivery.

Specific issues areas addressed by these committees are detailed in the next section on Public Policy Advocacy.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council focused on these major public policy issues:

- Employment and economic development issues (in collaboration with the Statewide Emergency Network for Social and Economic Security – SENSES, which was the successor organization to the State Coalition for Fair Public Assistance)
- Public assistance grant issues (playing a significant role in the 15 percent basic grant increase in 1989)
- Healthcare issues (including successful advocacy on the expansion of the Prenatal Care Assistance Program)
- Drug and alcohol issues (especially support for the consolidation of DAAA and DSAS into OASAS)
- Elderly services issues (including advocacy for an SSI increase, enhancements for adult day services, and policy recommendations on EISEP (Expanded In-Home Service for the Elderly Program))
- Family and children's service issues (including child welfare issues, teen pregnancy services, AIDS services)
- Housing issues (including advocacy for increases in the rural rental assistance program, and advocacy for creation and continued funding of neighborhood preservation companies and rural preservation companies)

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- Mental health issues (including enhancements to the CSS program, MR – MH issues, and the establishment of RCCA's)
- Issues relating to mentally retarded and developmentally disabled persons (including administration of ICF programs, respite care programs, day care services, and provision of generic health services)
- Rural issues (including taking the lead advocacy role in the creation of the State Office of Rural Affairs)

CHAPTER SIX

JOE BUTTIGIEG 1990-1998 – FOCUS ON ECONOMIC SECURITY

A. Membership

At the August 1, 1990 session, Father John Firpo was elected as Council Chairperson and Father John Gilmartin was elected as co-Chair. With the resignation from his Diocesan position of Father Firpo in November 1991, Father Gilmartin became Chairperson. Sister Maureen Joyce was elected in July 1992 as co-chairperson for 1992-1993 and was elected chairperson in September 1993, a position she was to hold until June 1999. At that same meeting, Monsignor Gugino was elected Vice-Chair and it was clarified the chairperson must be a Diocesan Director.

From fall 1990 through June 1998, Council membership was as follows. It should be noted that at the July 31, 1992 meeting, it was agreed that Council membership would be expanded to include the Diocesan Director and one other member from each Diocese, as well as members of a newly created Government Affairs Committee. (Where no dates are listed, the individuals were members of the Council throughout this entire period.)

Archdiocese of New York:	Monsignor James Murray Father Kevin Sullivan
Albany:	Sister Maureen Joyce Sister Peg Sullivan Kathy Greico (1992-1993) Bill Przylucki (1993-) Karen Dehais (1994-)
Brooklyn:	Tom DeStefano Elise Gotimer (1993-) Carlo DeRege (1996-)
Buffalo:	Monsignor John Conniff (-1995) Monsignor Henry Gugino Mary Jo Giambelluca (1995-) Father Joe Sicari (1996-)
Ogdensburg:	Father Steve Gratto (-1995) Sister Donna Franklin (1995-) Pamela Wilson (1995-) Anne Boulter Davis (1996-)
Rochester:	Father John Firpo (-1991) Paul Pickering (spring 1991 and 1993-) Jack Balinsky (1992-) Carolyn Portanova (1992-1993) Tony Barbaro (1993-)
Rockville Center:	Father John Gilmartin Paul Kirdahy (-1992) Dan McGowan (1992-1996) Mary Ann Dantuono (1993-1996)

Syracuse: Laura Cassell (1996-)
Donna O'Brien (1996-)
Father Bob Stephenson
Brian Walton
Dennis Manning (1994-)

B. Overview of Activities

At its special meeting held at Stella Maris Retreat House in Skaneateles on August 1, 1990, the Council recommended to Alan Davitt that he hire Joe Buttigieg as Executive Secretary of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors. Alan did so.

For nearly a decade, Joe had worked for Catholic Charities agencies. From 1987 until the time of his appointment he served as Director of Immigration and Refugee Services for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York. Prior to that he had worked for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockville Center. From 1986-1987, he served as the Diocesan Coordinator for Cultural and Ethnic Affairs. Prior to that he had worked as the Regional Administrator of the Westbury Community Life Center. Happily, in addition to this experience, Joe brought with him considerable computer skills which were to serve the Council and Conference very well.

From the very moment of his appointment, Joe and Council faced a dramatically changed situation.

In the external environment, the Governor announced in August that there was a considerable budget shortfall and cuts would be necessary even in the current fiscal year. So was ushered in a time of fiscal difficulty that was to last for several years. In response, as detailed below, the Council made the immediate decision also to prioritize and focus its activities on defending the rights and needs of poor and vulnerable individuals and families through advocacy for economic security programs.

At the same time, there was considerable change also within the Council and Conference itself. Alan Davitt had already announced that he would be retiring from his position as Executive Director of the State Catholic Conference at the end of June 1991, and the Council felt it needed to "get its act together" in preparation for working with a new Director. The three newest members of the Council, Father John Gilmartin from Rockville Center, Father John Firpo from Rochester and Father Bob Stephenson from Syracuse voiced a desire to more actively influence the work of the Council. At its June 1990 meeting, the Council deferred on selecting a new chairperson until there was a thorough review of Council purposes, priorities and practices. So was born the self-study process.

The Council met to commence this self-study process at Stella Maris Retreat House in Skaneateles on August 1, 1990. The session was facilitated by Sister Ann Bryan Smullin from Albany. This was also the first Council meeting for Sister Maureen Joyce, who had been hired to replace Sister Serena Branson as Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities in Albany.

As recorded by Father Steve Gratto, at this session, the Council established these items as the purpose and mission of the Council.

- An organized way to influence the Public Policy of the New York State Catholic Conference.
- An organized way to review other items that are not incorporated into the Public Policy agenda.

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- An organized way to discuss and deal with other items that apply to the body of directors of Catholic Charities agencies in New York State.
- A method for networking with other providers, coalitions, and groups on matters of interest, and a method of stimulating and fostering an internal networking of Catholic Charities staff and personnel, board and volunteers, throughout the state.
- An opportunity to strategize on how to apply the preferential option for the poor to impact on public policy. To also be informed in our policy decisions by Catholic social teaching and to elaborate on and contribute to Catholic social teaching.
- A forum within which we can look to the future.
- An organized way to come to specific action as a consequence of our meetings.
- An organized way in which the Directors of Catholic Charities develop their own ownership of a statewide agenda.
- It was also agreed that there was need to further discuss the role of committees and to meet with committees around four items:
 - The role of committees in fulfilling the mission and purpose of the Council.
 - The establishment of standing committees and/or ad hoc committees.
 - The utilization of a chair from the Council of Catholic Charities Directors for the committees rather than a chair separate from the Council
 - The utilization of other networks to accomplish some of the same tasks and activities that the committees carry out
- It was also agreed that committee meetings would be suspended pending this dialogue.

Following on a series of interactions with committee leadership, at its December 12, 1990 meeting, the Council agreed to the following finalization of committee functioning, which brought the self-study process to a close.

Committee	Liaison	Charge
Ad Hoc Income Security Work Group	Msgr. John Conniff Father Stephen Gratto	This group will be the point group for the Council to develop the strategy for lobbying for income security issues. Special emphasis needs to be placed on doing good research on who is the HR population. Appointed to this work group at the meeting were: Mary Ann Dantuono; Mary Jo Giambelluca; Bill Przulucki; Bob Mundy Others to be appointed.
Drug & Alcohol	Sister Maureen Joyce	Continue to meet with increased involvement with the Charities Directors. Policy issues around the implementation of the Bishops' Pastoral on Chemical Dependency.
OMRDD	Mr. Thomas DeStefano	Continue relationship with Commissioner.

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Legalization	Ms. Vincenza DeFazio	Meet for a time limited basis to explore the effects of the new Immigration law and the discrimination resulting from employer sanctions and report back to Council the results of exploration.
Housing Committee	Rev. John Firpo to have a phone conversation with Chairperson	Purpose of the phone conversation is to see if there is a common agenda between that committee and the Council.
OMH	Ad Hoc by Council	
Family & Childrens Services	Ad Hoc by Council	
Rural Issues	Ad Hoc by Council	
Elderly Services	Ad Hoc by Council	

Through the remainder of this time period, the work of the Committees can be summarized as follows:

There were Ad Hoc Convenings on immigration/legalization issues (fall 1990), of the Elderly Services Committee (1990 and 1993), and of a group to advise the Council on advocacy to repeal the Family and Children’s Services Block Grant (1991).

The Drug and Alcohol Committee advised the Council on the needle exchange program and advocated for service delivery priorities including services for addicted, pregnant women: perinatal services for infants born of addicted mothers, local assistance funding, and funding of preventive services.

The major focus of the work of the Housing Committee was advocacy for the establishment of the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.

The major accomplishment of the Mental Health Committee was successful advocacy for the Mental Health Community Reinvestment Bill, and subsequent monitoring of its implementation.

The Committee on Mentally Retarded Persons continued to enjoy excellent relationships with OMRDD Commissioners Art Webb, Elin Howe and Tom Maul.

(The work of the Government Affairs Committee is described later.)

Following is a brief overview of other general activities in this time period.

1991-1992 The Advent of John Kerry

John Kerry, who had been a pro-life Democrat state legislator from Maine, was hired as Executive Director of the Catholic Conference effective July 1, 1991. At the September 17th meeting of the Council, John presented “A Vision for the Catholic Conference” and described his plans for a Public Policy Education Network. In general, he envisioned a Conference that would be more concerned with budget issues, would focus on the legislature, and would seek to develop grassroots advocacy.

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John would come back to meet with the Council in a special meeting held on May 13, 1992 to discuss specific issues and concerns about the establishment of the Public Policy Education Network.

So began the relationship of the Council to John Kerry. As indicated at the outset, a key influence on the work of the Council at any time are the personality and priorities of the Executive Director, and John's presence would certainly influence the work of the Council for ten years. He brought energy and a new vision and approach. At the same time, there were to be tensions and issues between John and the Council over the years, particularly about the best way for the Catholic Conference to relate to the Executive Branch of Government.

Also of note in this program year was an effort of the Council to "fine-tune" its charge to the work of the various committees. At its November 16, 1991 meeting, the Council approved a three-fold charge to the committees:

1. development of supporting data for the issues currently on our agenda
2. development of recommendations to the Council on issues that emerge during the legislative session, that:
 - have a chance of being enacted
 - are not on our agenda
 - benefit the poor
3. development of issues for next year's legislative agenda

During the spring of 1992, at the request of the State Public Policy Committee, the Drug and Alcohol Committee and the Council addressed an issue which had come to major national prominence: needle exchange. Despite the recommendation for support made unanimously by the committee and Council, the Public Policy Committee chose to recommend to the Bishops a position of opposition.

The year closed on a tragic note. On June 3, 1992, Vinnie DeFazio, who had been a Council member for eight years and had made enormous contributions in her quiet behind the scenes way, was killed in a pedestrian-bus accident on her way from morning Mass to work. Monsignor Murray delivered a moving eulogy at her funeral Mass three days later. The Council would in the fall decide to create in her honor an award given annually by the Council for contributions made to the Council or the Church more generally in a more quiet, behind the scenes fashion.

1992-1993 – Getting Organized Again

At a special meeting held at Father Stephenson's house in Fulton on July 31, 1992, the Council made several decisions which evidenced a new energy and focus for the coming year. This meeting provides occasion to mention yet another new generation of Council leadership.

Sister Maureen Joyce had been appointed Diocesan Director in Albany in 1990. For many years she had been the Executive Director of Community Maternity Services, and had been involved with the State Catholic Conference through the Teen Pregnancy Task Force and in many other ways. She, too, would become effective in the special role of the Albany Director in relating to state government leadership, both in the Cuomo administration and also in the Pataki administration. She would serve as Council Chairperson from 1993-1999, and exert significant influence on the direction of its work.

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Jack Balinsky was appointed as Diocesan Director in Rochester in 1992, after two years with the DuLac Corporation, and would bring his experience as former staff person of the Council.

Throughout the late 1970's and 1980's, Monsignor Henry Gugino had ably assisted Monsignor Conniff and significantly contributed to the work of the Council. He would be appointed Diocesan Director in Buffalo in 1995, and would serve as Council Chairperson from 1999-2001, prior to his untimely death in 2002.

Decisions made at the July 31, 1992 meeting were:

First, re-election of Father Gilmartin as chairperson and election of Sister Maureen as co-chairperson. Second, on the recommendations of a "Social Policy Committee" comprised of Elise Gotimer, Mary Ann Dontuono and Kathy Greico, it adopted a six point advocacy priority agenda for the coming year:

1. development of supportive housing for people who are HIV positive.
2. provision of substance abuse services for drug and alcohol addicted pregnant women and women with children.
3. provision of perinatal care services to babies with special needs due to maternal substance abuse and/or alcohol abuse during pregnancy.
4. advocacy for State Earned Income Tax Credit.
5. advocacy for federal Earned Income Tax Credit.
6. advocacy for increase in local funding for drug and alcohol services, prevention and education.

(It was clear from this action that the work of the Drug and Alcohol Committee over the last five years had paid off.)

Third, creation of a Government Affairs Committee that would be a part of the Council and would perform analysis for the Council on legal, regulatory and judicial issues. Initial members were Elise Gotimer, Mary Ann Dantuono, Kathy Greico and Paul Pickering. Later, others were added to the committee including, Bill Przulucki, Father Kevin Sullivan, Mary Jo Giambelluca and Carlo DeRege. Their efforts over the years were to be most supportive of the work of Joe Buttigieg and helped focus the attention of the Council.

Fourth, based upon input from the committees, the Council approved work plans for these committees: Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Housing and Income Security.

Finally, the Council determined after a hiatus of two and a half years, to reinstitute the Statewide Annual Convening and Annual Human Services Reception. Following on the model used by the Council in 1989 and 1990, these sessions were combined and held at the Omni in Albany on December 9, 1992.

The "convening" was held in modified form and consisted of presentations by Father Fred Kammer, who had recently been appointed as President of Catholic Charities USA, on his vision for the organization. He focused on four areas of concern: support to the field, advocacy, development and membership. There was then a more lengthy presentation by Stuart Lefkowitz from the State Department of Social Services about Medicaid managed care. In his presentation, Stuart detailed provisions of Chapter 165 of the Laws of 1991 providing that: "there would be developed throughout

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the state a Medicaid managed care system with the ultimate goal of enrolling 50 percent of the Medicaid population in a managed care system.”

At the subsequent reception, the Mugavero Award was presented to Monsignor Charles J. Fahey who had been Diocesan Director in Syracuse, was then Director of the Third Age Center at Fordham, and was a recognized national expert on issues of Church, healthcare and aging. It was most fitting that the first Vinnie DeFazio award was presented to Millie Shanley, long-time attorney for Brooklyn Catholic Charities who had just left her position to become counsel for Catholic Medical Center, who had worked closely with Vinnie for nearly a decade, and who shared Vinnie’s style of quite, behind-the-scenes contribution.

1993-1994 – Collaboration with Healthcare

A major focus of Council activity for 1993-1994 was on collaboration with Catholic Healthcare providers, in light of national discussion about this approach in which Bishop Joseph Sullivan was a key national leader.

It was decided to hold a joint convening between Catholic Charities and the Catholic Healthcare Council conjoined with the Statewide Annual Convening and Annual Human Services Reception.

On April 12, 1994, the Statewide Annual Convening focused on the Catholic Charities USA Vision 2000 process. (Tom DeStefano and Father John Gilmartin were members of the CCUSA Vision 2000 Task Force and significant contributors to this work.)

At the Annual Human Services recognition, the Bishop Mugavero award was conferred to Robert McAuliffe, an attorney from Syracuse who had a long record of contribution both to Syracuse Catholic Charities and to the State Catholic Conference, including substantial work with Charles Tobin. After Charles’ retirement, Bob had become “guardian of the Catholic Charities Corporate Charter”.

The Vinnie DeFazio Award was given to Monsignor Thomas Cribbin from Brooklyn. He had been a leader in developing programs for persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities since the first days of deinstitutionalization. As chairperson of the Council MR committee, he was a recognized force in advocacy with state government.

More than 100 persons attended the joint Charities-Healthcare convening the subsequent day. Major presentations were given by Bishop Sullivan: “Collaboration and Church Culture”, Patricia Cahill CEO of the Archdiocese of New York Healthcare System; “Motivation for Collaborative Church Efforts” and Mike Dowling from the State Administration on “Health Reform in New York State”. Subsequent workshop sessions were organized by Dioceses and it was suggested that on-going joint planning task forces be established in each Diocese.

1994-1995 – Transition - the Election of Governor Pataki

Obviously, the dominant event of the 1994-1995 program year was the election of Governor George Pataki in November 1994. Shortly after the election, the Conference made the decision to suspend almost all constituent group meetings to focus on developing a report to the leadership of the incoming Pataki administration. The New York State Catholic Conference Transition Report to

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Governor Pataki was submitted on January 12, 1995. It outlined in detail the institutional presence and contributions of Church entities in the state, and identified Catholic Conference priorities and recommendations on the broad scope of its concerns. From this transition effort, there was also created within the conference “model program forms”, where each Diocesan Catholic Charities agency was to submit information on three programs in which the new administration might have interest.

The coming of a new administration gave new urgency to the Annual Human Services reception, and with it the Statewide Annual Convening. At the November 30, 1994 Council meeting, it was affirmed that goals of the annual reception were:

1. To provide an opportunity for State Commissioners and Council members to engage in meaningful discussion and exchange of information.
2. To provide Commissioners with a sense of Catholic Charities – what it is, and what they expect.
3. To provide an opportunity for informal dialogue.

It was agreed that a joint Statewide Annual Convening and Human Services Reception would be held on May 31, 1995, at the Schuyler Inn in Menands.

In the morning session at that convening, led by Dennis Manning from Syracuse, participants in the convening addressed in small groups “story booking sessions” around these three questions:

1. How does Catholic Charities respond to the current environment?
2. What will Catholic Charities look like in 2000 as a managed care provider?
3. What will Catholic Charities look like with parish social ministry in 2000? (This question is interesting, because the Council had wanted to address formally questions about parish social ministry for some years, but had been unable to find a way to do so.)

John Carr from USCC made a presentation at lunch entitled “The Role of Catholic Charities in these Times.”

At the lunch, annual Council awards were given to Monsignor John Conniff and Paul Sauerland.

As recipient of the Mugavero Award, Monsignor Conniff was recognized for thirty years of service to Catholic Charities in Buffalo and to the Council since its inception. He had been a steady hand in the many transitions and issues faced by the Council over the years, and had recently retired from his position.

The Vinnie DeFazio Award was given to Paul Sauerland, a long time staff person for Catholic Charities of Rockville Center. A person himself disabled by blindness, Paul had made significant contributions to the Catholic Conference Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities.

The early afternoon was devoted to preparation by the committees for meetings later that afternoon with appropriate state government executive branch leaders. These meetings were followed by the reception. In general, it was felt that this event was a good way to connect with the new state administration.

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Another major initiative of this program year was the work of the Council Special Task Force on Pregnant and Parenting Teens on AFDC, chaired by Pat Fox from Rochester. In light of discussions about welfare reform at the federal and state level about this population, the Committee recommended focusing on prevention by installing self-reliance and responsibility through building parenting skills, connecting families with resources and participating with and helping parents parent.

Finally, in June 1995, the State Bishops' issued a statement outlining six key principles which should inform adoption of welfare reform at the federal level. These principles were the basis of advocacy when four Bishops and four Charities Directors met with Senators Moynihan and d'Amato in September during final Senate debate on welfare reform, leading Senator Moynihan to read into the Congressional Record the subsequent week a commendation to the Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities for their consistent advocacy for the poor over thirty years.

1995-1996 – Managed Care

During this program year, the Council began its two year focus on managed care, described in the next section.

The Council agreed to hold a joint Statewide Annual Convening/Human Services Reception, based upon the model of the previous year. The meetings were held on May 29, 1996 at the Schuyler Inn. Father Fred Kammer from Catholic Charities USA gave the keynote presentation on "Ethical Issues in Managed Care".

The Bishop Mugavero Award was given to one of his early protégé's-Bishop Joseph Sullivan. Bishop Sullivan's legions of contributions to Catholic Charities, the Catholic Church and the community are well known.

The Vinnie DeFazio Award was presented to Mary Ann Dantuono, an attorney on staff at Catholic Charities at Rockville Center who was leaving to return to private practice. Her contributions to the work of the Council, particularly through the Government Affairs Committee, had been substantial.

Again, in the afternoon, there were preparatory committee sessions and meetings with Executive Branch leadership, followed by the Annual Human Services reception.

1996-1997 – Welfare Reform and Managed Care

The Council had begun its focus on managed care in the wake of enactment of Chapter 165 of the laws of 1991 establishing a Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program with a goal of enrolling 50 percent of Medicaid recipients. With the filing of the application by the Pataki administration on March 17, 1995 for an 1115 Medicaid waiver attention to Medicaid Managed Care issues increased dramatically. Beginning with the September 12, 1995 meeting, the Catholic Charities Directors began a series of meetings and discussions about the role of Catholic Charities in the provision of Medicaid Managed Care, which largely consumed the attention and agenda time of the Council for the next two years.

It should be noted that stimulated by a presentation given by Monsignor Alan Placa from Rockville Centre at the June 9, 1995 meeting of the Bishops of the state, and through the leadership of Cardinal

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O'Connor, Fidelis Care of New York, the Bishops' statewide HMO, was formally created in January 1997.

It should be noted also that Joe Buttigieg played a critical role in the establishment of Fidelis by successfully suggesting a legislative approach in the enactment of the managed care program, to exempt Fidelis from providing contraceptive services.

The two-year discussion about the role of Catholic Charities in the provision of managed care came to conclusion at the September 3, 1997 Council meeting.

After considering many different possibilities, the Council took the position that Fidelis should oversee the provision of behavioral health services in Medicaid Managed Care and that the Catholic Charities agencies should be viewed as important partners in that effort.

The 1996-1997 program year was also the time of the most intense Council advocacy on welfare reform issues, because with the adoption of federal welfare reform legislation, the focus then turned to adoption of a state plan.

State implementation of welfare reform was the major focus of Council activities in the fall of 1996. Welfare reform was a major priority in the 1997 Catholic Conference legislative agenda. On February 4, 1997, the Catholic Conference participated in a joint statement "Religious Leaders Respond to New York Works", the administration's state welfare reform proposal. On May 29, 1997, the Catholic Bishops issued another statement on welfare reform, again emphasizing their six principles articulated two years earlier, and relating them to the current debate.

Clearly, the Catholic Conference had a significant impact on this major debate. "Victories" in the final bill adopted in July 1997, included:

- Preserves current benefit levels and includes a 42 percent income disregard which allows individuals and families to keep 42 percent of their earnings before they begin to lose benefits.
- Establishes a 5-year time limit on cash benefits under TANF and a 2-year time limit for single adults in Home Relief.
- At the end of the time-limit both families and single adults will move into a safety-net program that will voucher rent payments and make 20 percent of the whole grant available in cash with the remainder of the benefit available through an Electronic Benefit Transfer Card which will be phased in over 5 years during which time Home Relief recipients will continue to receive all their benefits in cash.
- Statewide standards are essentially preserved with some options available to counties opting into certain services.
- Day care is guaranteed to children up to age 13, up from the Administration's original proposal of up to age 6. There is also a significant increase in funding for day care.
- There is no expansion in Learnfare, no family cap, and children will not have their case closed if their parent does not comply with work rules.
- State purchased Food Stamps will be available to immigrants at county option.

1997-1998 - Transition

In January 1998, Joe Buttigieg announced that he was resigning from his position as Executive Secretary of the Council to take an administrative position with Albany Catholic Charities effective March 2, 1998. Even with able assistance from other conference staff, Council and committee efforts were diminished somewhat in spring 1998 by this decision. A search committee was formed to work with John Kerry to hire a successor.

At the Schuyler Inn, on May 27, 1998, there was a statewide convening (no reception was held this year) focusing on the internal relationship between the Council and committees. Individual committee sessions were held in the morning, and then in the afternoon there was a general session with the Council where the status and priorities of each committee were discussed. Father Kevin Sullivan presided at Mass. The Mugavero award was to be presented to Monsignor James Murray in recognition of his long time service to the Council as Diocesan Director in the Archdiocese, and in honor of his retirement (since Monsignor Murray was not present, the award was actually presented to him the subsequent March at the Annual Human Services Reception.)

Conclusion

Throughout the 1990's, with strong support from Joe Buttigieg, the Council continued to respond effectively to the external environment affecting human services delivery. After an early transition period, the Council focused successfully on budget advocacy on behalf of the poor, and a series of issues relating to economic security. In the middle 1990's, the Council gave major priority to addressing the most significant change in the arena of service delivery – the advent of managed care. While the work of the committees had been somewhat diminished because of the focus on these major priorities, the Council was poised in June 1998 to respond to new policy and program opportunities in the wake of welfare reform and a much improved state economy.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council focused public policy advocacy on these major issues:

- Continued budget advocacy to deflect budget cutbacks away from the poor
- Economic security issues (making work pay and reforming welfare)
- Drug and Alcohol issues (including needle exchange, managed care needs for special populations, family support communities, and implementation of consolidation of DAAA and DSAS into OASAS)
- Housing issues (including funding for production programs, SRO support services program, and federal low income housing tax credit)
- Mental health issues (including the Mental Health Community Reinvestment Bill, and managed care issues)
- Issues relating to mentally retarded persons (including medical waiver implications long-term care, and welfare reform implementation.)

CHAPTER SEVEN

DAVID HAMILTON – 1998-2001 – TRANSITION

A. Membership

Sister Maureen Joyce served as Chairperson from 1993-1999. A veteran leader, located in Albany, and well connected to state government leaders in many ways, she had been the “heart and soul” of the Council for the six years she had served as Chairperson.

At a Charities Director’s celebration held on October 1, 1999 in Rochester in the context of the Catholic Charities USA Annual Meeting, the Council thanked Sister Maureen for her leadership, presenting her a plaque inscribed: “Partners in Serving the Poor. In Gratitude and Appreciation to Sister Maureen Joyce, RSM Council Chair 1993-1999.”

At the May 21, 1999 meeting, Monsignor Henry Gugino was elected as Chairperson, and it was left to his discretion as to whether to appoint a Vice-Chairperson. While no appointment was made, Jack Balinsky was to serve as defacto Vice-Chair for the next two years.

With regard to membership, Sister Donna Franklin was appointed Diocesan Director in Ogdensburg in 1995. Once again the Daughters of Charity responded to the request for assistance from a Diocesan Bishop (Paul Loverde). Her early years in this position were focused on her Diocesan agency and attending to her mother’s health problems. In this time frame, she became a much more active member of the Council, helping the Council to focus especially on rural issues and issues relating to family farmers. She was a significant participant also in the discussions that led to the transition process.

Dennis Manning was appointed Syracuse Diocesan Director on March 1, 1999, after serving as Utica Regional Director for several years. He brought extensive background in mental health services delivery. His quiet questioning of the role of the Council helped bring about the transition described in this chapter.

After serving for many years as Chief Fiscal Officer of Catholic Charities of Rockville Center, and serving on the Council in that capacity and in her interim role, Laura was appointed Diocesan Director on December 1, 1999. With her financial background and analytic approach, she joined with Dennis as a major force in shaping the Council of the future. She would later serve as Council Chairperson beginning July 1, 2003.

Monsignor Kevin Sullivan first joined the work of the Council as a member of the Public Assistance Committee in 1988. Throughout the early 1990’s, he obtained a doctorate in healthcare administration at NYU while continuing to work at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese. He was named Chief Operating Officer and joined the Council in 1995. He was named Diocesan Director in November 2001. He would provide substantial leadership at the state and national level throughout his entire tenure.

With these changes, during this three-years period, Council membership was as follows:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor James Murray, Father Kevin Sullivan
Albany: Sister Maureen Joyce, Karen Dehais, Bill Przulucki, Joe Buttigieg, Sister Peg Sullivan
Brooklyn: Tom DeStefano, Carlo DeRege, Elise Gotimer
Buffalo: Monsignor Henry Gugino, Mary Jo Giambelluca, Father Joe Sicari
Ogdensburg: Sister Donna Franklin, Anne Boulter-Davis, Pamela Wilson
Rochester: Jack Balinsky, Tony Barbaro, Paul Pickering
Rockville Center: Father John Gilmartin, (-1998) Laura Cassell, Donna Murphy-O'Brien (1998-1999), Paul Engelhart (1999-)
Syracuse: Father Bob Stephenson (-1999), Brian Walton, Dennis Manning, Paula Currie (1999-2001), Joe Slavik (1999-2001)

B. Overview of Activities

1. Introduction

Joe Buttigieg left the Catholic Conference to assume his position with Albany Catholic Charities in March 1998. Over the ensuing eight months, various Conference staff, including John Kerry, Natasha Kerry and Rick Barnes provided assistance in staffing.

At the recommendation of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors, John Kerry hired David Hamilton as Associate Director for Catholic Charities at the New York State Catholic Conference effective November 2, 1998. At the time, David had been working as chief legislative policy analyst for the National Association of Social Workers NYS Chapter. He had a Masters Degree in Social Work from UCLA and earlier in 1998, had earned a doctorate in social policy from Virginia Commonwealth University. David brought with him a keen analytic mind that would be helpful with budget analysis, and a research and policy orientation that would help the Charities Directors place their advocacy efforts in a larger policy context. Despite the fact that he was the first staff person since Jim Cashen not hired from within the Charities system, he quickly learned the work of Charities. His focus was more, however, on the professional social work component of Charities than on the Church ministry component.

The work of the Council in this time period is presented in the following sections:

- Re-establishment of committees
- Membership
- Relationship to Catholic Conference
- Ongoing activities
- Work of the committees
- Transition

2. Re-establishment of Committees

In the summer and early fall of 1998, in light of new challenges and program opportunities with an improved state economy, and with the increasing specialization in human resources delivery, the Council made the major policy decision to reinstate and reinvigorate the committees.

The reestablishment of the committees was launched with a kick off event at the Schuyler Inn in Menands on October 30, 1998.

The committees that met included:

- Behavioral Health (the combination of what had been Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health Committees)
- Elderly Services
- Family and Children's Services
- Housing
- Immigration
- Mental Retardation
- Parish Social Ministry (yet another effort to establish this group)
- Rural Issues
- Welfare Reform (formerly Income Security)

The charge to these committees, articulated by Jack Balinsky that day, and reaffirmed in a letter sent to all Council Committee Chairs a year later, was to:

- identify issues and make recommendations to the Council of Catholic Charities Directors regarding items which may be appropriate to form the Conference's legislative agenda
- serve as a resource for the Conference in communicating with members of the legislature and Executive Department regarding the probable effect of pending legislation or regulations on services and programs operated by Catholic Charities or on clients of Diocesan Catholic Charities
- advise and inform the Council of Catholic Charities Directors as it assists the Catholic Conference's Public Policy Committee in responding to the Executive Budget, and:
- assist the Public Policy Education Network at the Conference and Diocesan levels in activities directed toward educating and mobilizing constituents for legislative advocacy, including particularly attendance at the Public Policy Forum

Committees were reminded that they were advisory to the Council: any actions or policy recommendations had to be approved by the Council of Catholic Charities Directors prior to implementation.

3. Relationship to New York State Catholic Conference

Throughout its entire existence, the Council of Catholic Charities Directors was a creature and constituent subgroup of the New York State Catholic Conference. The earlier narrative has focused more on the independent work of the Council. In addition to this independent work, much of the work of the Council was in relation to and support of the work of the Conference. As illustrative of this collaborative work, which occurred over the entire life of the Council, description is given here of these activities during this time period.

a. New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee

At every Council meeting throughout its existence, the Council would review, and where appropriate, develop recommendations on agenda items for the Public Policy Committee meeting typically held the subsequent day.

During this time period there were two issues in which the Council was involved which serve as examples of this interaction.

First in 1992, and then again in 1998, the Council recommended that the Conference take a position in support of needle exchange programs. In spring 1999, after hearing two presentations on the matter, the Public Policy Committee determined, based on the presentations and a letter of opposition from Cardinal O'Connor, to keep a position of opposition to this program.

A second matter in which the Council was involved in advising the Public Policy Committee was the matter of facilitated enrollment programs for the Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus program, addressed in spring 2001. The position of the Council was one of support for the Family Health Plus program, based upon the moral principle of proportionality, recognition of the need for outreach, and continued advocacy for removal of objectionable services from the program. The decision of the Public Policy Committee was that "facilitated enrollment" was a misnomer, and that this was really an outreach program which was morally permissible.

b. Development of State Catholic Conference Legislative Agenda

By the early 1980's, the development of the State Catholic Conference legislative agenda had become a standardized and routinized process. By June 30th of any given year, any constituent group (including in the 1990's individual Diocesan Public Policy Committees) had the opportunity to suggest any new issues for the agenda, with the requirement that a draft issue paper be submitted as part of the recommendation. Over the summer, a Legislative Agenda Committee with representatives from each of the constituent groups would meet and finalize a draft agenda by late summer, which was then reviewed by constituent groups before presentation to the State Public Policy Committee at its early September meeting, for review and then approval by the Bishops at the end of September for publication at the beginning of the next calendar year.

Over the years, the Council had considerable input to this process. From the earliest establishment of the committees, one of their central functions was review and revision of existing issue papers based upon recent developments, and suggestion of new issue papers.

In addition to providing annual input into the content of the Conference legislative agenda, the Council in the late 1990's began to have increasing concerns about the process and format of the Legislative Agenda. With regard to process, several times, but unsuccessfully, the Council recommended that there be a longer review period of the draft agenda.

With regard to format, as a result of lengthy discussion at the Council meeting on September 6, 2000, the Council suggested that the Legislative Agenda be published with sections based

upon the seven major principles of Catholic Social Teaching, using each principle as an introduction to that particular section. Joe Buttigieg and Jack Balinsky drafted a document illustrating how this might be done. Two positive outcomes came from this suggestion. First, it was recognized that the state agenda was weak on environmental issues, and efforts were made over the next several years to strengthen the agenda in this regard. Second, it was agreed that in addition to the Annual Legislative Agenda, there would be published a longer document describing more fully the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching and detailing some examples of public policy issues relating to these priorities. This document entitled “Pursuing Justice” became a very useful tool for parish social ministry committees and others.

c. New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Forum

In March 1986, at the suggestion of Bishop Hubbard, who observed that so many other groups had annual large lobby days that the Catholic Conference was conspicuous by its absence in this regard, the Catholic Conference organized its first annual legislative lobby day or Public Policy Forum. Over the subsequent twenty years, the Council and its members were major contributors to the success of these annual events. Often Catholic Charities leaders had major responsibility for organizing participation from their individual Dioceses, and many such participants were drawn from Catholic Charities staff and parish social ministry volunteers. The Council annually made determinations of what would be the “targeted” objectives for human services for which the group would lobby on this day. Targeted objectives for the 2000 Forum were:

- expansion of supports (day care, housing, transportation, health, etc.) for working families
- investment of TANF funds in the working poor
- eliminate Family and Children’s Block Grant
- rural services, including healthcare, education, employment and social services
- access to services for people who are vulnerable because of age, addiction or disability

Often, Charities Directors joined with other constituent group leaders for meetings with top state legislative leaders. Usually, the Council had a representative also at the Cardinal’s press conference on lobby day. (Sister Maureen Joyce was a regular during her years as Council Chair).

d. Bishops’ Meetings

Another area of contribution of the Council to the Conference came through the annual meeting in June of the Bishops of the state with representatives of the Public Policy Committee. Usually, at these sessions, there would be educational presentations, and usually the Council Chair would make this presentation. For example, in this time period, Monsignor Gugino gave the presentation each year. In June 1999, he spoke on welfare reform, addressing two questions:

- What has happened to former recipients?
- Are supportive services and training being provided adequately to families still on welfare?

This meeting was an important event in the history of the State Catholic Conference, and therefore, the Council, because it was the last such meeting at which Cardinal O'Connor presided.

John Cardinal O'Connor had been appointed Archbishop of New York in 1984, and made a Cardinal the subsequent year. From the first, he was an outspoken advocate for the poor and vulnerable and a staunch Church spokesperson on life issues. Throughout the 1980's, much of his attention was focused on internal Church affairs and New York City issues. With the Webster Supreme Court decision in 1989, inviting states to develop legislation which would further restrict abortions, Cardinal O'Connor became much more involved in the work of the Catholic Conference. The increased focus on the abortion issue led to some tension between the Church and state government which may have had impact on the effectiveness of advocacy on other issues. Nonetheless, the Cardinal continued to champion those in need, and had a special place in his heart for persons with AIDS, expressed in his night-time visits to the AIDS ward at St. Clare's Hospital. It is fitting that at this his last meeting, he called the Church to renewed advocacy of Rockefeller Drug Law Reform.

At the June 2000 meeting of the Public Policy Committee with the Bishops, Monsignor Gugino again spoke on welfare reform with a presentation entitled "Defining successful welfare reform as ending poverty, not reducing caseloads".

Finally, in June 2001 given President Bush's major program, Monsignor addressed issues relating to the "Faith-Based Initiative".

e. Criminal Justice Issues and Revenue Issues

Although the Catholic Conference established separate groups to address criminal justice issues and revenue/tax issues, the Council over the years engaged in considerable collaborative activities with those groups.

The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee was established in 1975. For many years, there was close cooperation in that the staff person for the committee was the Charities staff person: Jim Cashen, Jack Balinsky and Joe Buttigieg.

Illustrative of this long-time cooperation during this time period, was the establishment of a joint meeting between the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee and the Behavioral Health Committee held on May 20, 1999. It was agreed that the common advocacy agenda for both groups was reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws, expansion of alternatives to incarceration, and improvement of services within prisons, particularly for persons with mental illness.

It was out of advocacy from the Council (and information provided by other human services advocacy groups, particularly the State Communities Aid Association), that the Conference Advisory Committee on Government Fiscal Affairs was established in 1983. Again, there was long-standing close connection in that Jack Balinsky staffed the committee from 1983-1990, and then chaired it until its activities were "put on hold" at the request of Cardinal O'Connor in 1995.

Nonetheless, the work of the committee was helpful to the Conference even during this time period. In the late 1980's, the Conference had been a moving force in creating the Alliance for State Budget Reform. Ten years later, the issues were the same, and in December 1999, the Bishops issued a statement for budget reform, citing the severe impact the state's chronically late budgets had on delivery of health, education and social services. In this statement, the Bishops set forth "a framework for developing timely budgets which met the economic needs of the least among us". Proposals included:

- A consensus revenue forecasting process to determine available revenues, along with budget contingency plans and sufficient reserve funds to guard against revenue shortfalls;
- Allowing additional time for budget deliberations by either advancing the date of the Executive's budget submittal, or delaying the start of the fiscal year;
- An increased role for rank-and-file members of the legislature, through the use of conference committees made up of majority and minority members from both houses;
- Enhancing public involvement in the process, by making conference committee meetings public, and simplifying both the budget format and financial planning.

4. Council Activities

a. Annual Human Services Reception and Awards

At its December 10, 1998 meeting, the Council raised again the question of holding an annual human services reception. No reception had been held since the May 27, 1996 event at the Schuyler Inn, held in conjunction with committee meetings. The Council decided to reinstate this annual practice, stating that "the goal of the reception is to increase familiarity of the Commissioners with the public policy agenda of the Conference, particularly the effect of budgetary decisions and regulatory proposals upon Catholic Charities operated and affiliated agencies and those they serve". It was decided to hold the reception at the State Catholic Conference office the evening before the Public Policy Forum, March 8, 1999. Similar receptions were held on March 27, 2000, and March 12, 2001. Although there were some concerns about lack of participation of state representatives, particularly commissioners, generally it was felt these were successful events. In evaluating the 2000 event at the May 24th meeting, the council determined "there is need to develop a specific agenda and program to focus remarks and activities". The program for the 2001 event was indeed more focused.

Monsignor Murray had been the recipient of the 1998 Bishop Mugavero Award. The DeFazio award was last given to Mary Ann Dantuono in 1996. At the Council meeting held on April 19, 1999, it was agreed that the DeFazio award winner should:

1. have a distinguished record of employment (at least 10 years with Catholic Charities)
2. be involved at the state or national level on issues of concern to Catholic Charities and the Church
3. typically, has been a hard working "behind the scenes" staff person

At a dinner gathering for past and present Catholic Charities leadership from New York held on October 1, 1999 in the context of the Catholic Charities USA Annual meeting in Rochester, Monsignor John Gilmartin was recognized as the 1999 Bishop Mugavero Award winner and

Maurice Tierney, long-time Rochester Catholic Charities staff member, who had contributed much to the Council, was recognized as the Vinnie DeFazio Award winner, although neither were able to be present that evening.

After some continuing discussion about the awards, it was agreed that the Council should return to the practice of presenting the awards in the context of the Annual Human Services reception with the presentation of awards at the March 12, 2001 reception. The Bishop Mugavero award was presented to Sister Una McCormack, long-time Executive Director of the Children's Home Bureau in New York, who was retiring. The Vinnie DeFazio Award was presented to Mary Jo Giambelluca of Buffalo. She was a Council member who had first become involved in Council activities in 1980 as the Western NY regional coordinator of the Coalition for Fair Public Assistance and who also had served as Chairperson of the Elderly Services Committee in both its incarnations. At this session, the Council also recognized Father Bob Stephenson for his service as Syracuse Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities from 1987-1999.

b. Catholic Charities USA 1999 Annual Meeting

The 1999 Annual Meeting of Catholic Charities USA was held from October 1-4, 1999 in Rochester. Major speakers at the Conference were Millard Fuller, founder of Habitat for Humanity; Nobel Peace Prize Winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu; and Sister Joan Chittister.

The Council had agreed in 1996 to serve as joint sponsors of the event. Under the able leadership of Conference Coordinator Pat Fox from Rochester, who had made several presentations to the Council over the previous two years, the Council had input into program and logistics for the Conference, as well as helping to support the event financially.

c. Budget Advocacy

A hallmark of Council activity during the Hamilton era was budget advocacy. Like Joe Buttigieg before him, David's considerable analytic skills helped the Council to have a detailed understanding of the budget and provided a foundation for specific advocacy activities. Budget recommendations focused on both economic security and service delivery priorities and are summarized in the final section of this chapter.

d. Ongoing Council Activities

Highlights of other matters addressed at Council business meetings during this time included:

- research on the Family Loan Program
- establishment of an Ad Hoc Information Services Committee as a means to share developments on information technology
- establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to relate to the state in its activities around Charitable Choice legislation and passage
- focus on implementation of Kendra's law
- ongoing discussion about the relationship of the Council to the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation

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- ongoing discussion about Council response to the Lobby Law enacted in 1999
- successful recommendation to the Bishops that they issue a Jubilee Day statement in honor of persons with disabilities
- preparation in 2001 for the Bishops of a statement about implications of the ending of federal benefits after five years of welfare reform

e. Committee Activities

The work of the revitalized committees during this time frame can be summarized as follows:

The Behavioral Health Committee gave significant input on discussions about the impact of welfare reform on delivery of chemical abuse services.

The two major accomplishments of the Elderly Services Committee came in 2000: obtaining an increase in SSI rates, and securing additional funding for adult social day care.

The high watermark of the work of the Family and Children's Services Committee was its input on the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act in New York State. Throughout the work of the committee, there was tension as there had been in the first incarnation of the committee between those concerned about institutional child care issues and those concerned with more broad-based community issues. It was agreed at the Council meeting held on February 20, 2001, that the committee would be disbanded and that a replacement committee would "focus on the broad range of issues affecting children and families in New York State, e.g. child care, poverty, tax credits".

Continuing its tradition of high vitality, the Housing Committee sponsored a major convening on Assisted Living on May 10, 2000 and continued to provide legislative testimony about the need for affordable housing.

The work of the Immigration Committee was hindered to some extent by conflict between upstate Catholic Charities agencies and the Bureau of Immigration and Reform Services of state government.

Through the leadership of Paul Pickering from Rochester and Gary Siegel of Albany, the Committee on Services to Mentally Retarded Persons continued to be one of the Council's most effective committees, giving input through regular meetings with OMRDD Commissioner Tom Maul.

Like its predecessor committee, the Parish Social Ministry Committee had difficulty in developing a clear focus, and was disbanded by a Council decision at the Council's January 17, 2001 meeting.

Through the energetic and enthusiastic leadership of Tim McMahon, the Rural Issues Committee provided ongoing support and education for its members, raised the visibility of rural issues in the State Catholic Conference, and maintained effective on-going relationships with state government entities.

Like most in the not-for-profit community, the Welfare Reform Committee was overwhelmed by the enormity of issues surrounding welfare reform, struggled to find ways to analyze its impact, and shifted its focus to advocacy on TANF surplus funds.

Public Policy issues addressed by the committees are summarized in the final section of this chapter.

f. Transition

At its September 6, 2000 meeting, two years into the revitalization process of committees, the Council determined that it was time to evaluate the functioning and effectiveness of committees. As it turned out, this decision was to lead to a yearlong focus on evaluating not only the work of the committees, but also the work of the Council itself.

After the September meeting, David Hamilton, on behalf of the Council, wrote to the committee Chairpersons asking that they come to the October 25, 2000 meeting prepared to address the following questions with regard to their individual committees:

- what is the charge to and function of the committee
- evaluate the role and responsibility of the committee
- recommendations as to the process and procedures for addressing cross-cutting issues among committees
- what are other opportunities for committee functioning, e.g. best practice models

Based upon the presentations made and discussion, the Council made these decisions with regard to the functioning of the committees:

- with regard to the Behavioral Health Committee, it was agreed to establish a separate AIDS committee, and to remove from their agenda attention to preventive services (this was later rescinded as the committee argued that these services were an important part of their mission)
- as previously indicated, the decision was made to discontinue the work of the Family and Children's Services Committee, and to reconstitute a new committee with a broader, community-based focus.
- the Rural Issues Committee was commended for a job well done
- the Elderly Services Committee was commended for its effective work on social day care
- it was recognized that the work of the committee on Mentally Retarded Persons continued to be very effective, in part because of the ongoing relationship with Commissioner Maul
- the Housing Committee was commended for its advocacy with regard to assisted living
- it was suggested to the Welfare Reform Committee that work needed to be done to focus their efforts
- discussion about the work of the Immigration Committee was deferred because the Chairperson Ann Brittain was delayed in Buffalo because of a flight problem

Discussion about the functioning of the committees continued at the January 17, 2001 Council meeting. At that meeting, it was affirmed that there would be established a separate AIDS/HIV committee, that the Parish Social Ministry Committee would be discontinued, and

that there would be appointed a new Children's and Families Service Committee with a broader community-focused agenda.

Discussion about the committees also led to a broader discussion about the purpose and functioning of the Council itself. At the March 12, 2001 meeting, a committee was appointed to address the fundamental questions of the mission and purpose of the Council. This committee included Laura Cassell, Dennis Manning, and Jack Balinsky.

This committee made a presentation at the April 4, 2001 meeting of the Council. Their recommendation, which was accepted, was that the Council had five purposes:

1. **Advise** NYSCC on Public Policy
2. **Receive** committee reports
3. **Advocate**
How: a. through local and statewide network activities
b. through direct contact as a group with policy/decision-makers
c. through David's office
For example: 1) Family Health Plus
2) 5-year welfare cap – what is our strategy?
3) Immigration amnesty issue
4) implementation of Bishops' Criminal Justice Statement
4. **Information Sharing and Support** of each other's ministries through dialogue, analysis and mutual assistance.
1) Parish Social Ministry – focus on development
2) CCUSA updates
3) Best practices – include education component with explicit connection between Catholic Social Teaching and issues
For example: a) issue of professional obligation vs. contract requirements vs. Catholic Social Teaching
b) Catholic Social Teaching and diversity
c) employment risk management – legal vs. moral responsibility
5. Nurture our own **spiritual growth** and that of our staff, our board and benefactors

Based upon this presentation and discussion, these further decisions were made by the Council at the April 4, 2001 meeting:

- that the Council membership would consist of the Diocesan Director and up to two additional Diocesan representatives
- that it was essential that the Diocesan Director participate, and that, if this was not possible, the Diocesan Director would send a representative
- that there would be one vote per Diocese
- that the program year would be considered to be September 1 – August 30
- that there would be later discussion of the reinstatement of the statewide annual convening which had not been held since 1996
- and, that there would be a planning retreat held on August 28th and 29th to plan the Council program for 2001-2002

Thus the Council was poised to move into a new era.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

Major public policy issues addressed by the Council during this time frame included:

- Economic security priorities (including job development, child care funding and expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit)
- Welfare reform issues (including availability of benefits for legal immigrants and use of TANF surplus funds)
- Health issues (especially health insurance accessibility)
- Mental hygiene issues (including the Mental Health Community Reinvestment initiative, and the New York CARES program)
- In concert with the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, criminal justice issues (including reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws, alternatives to incarceration, and improving conditions and services for prisoners with mental illness)
- Behavioral health issues (including the impact of welfare reform and managed care, Kendra's law implementation, AIDS issues and HIPAA issues)
- Elderly services issues (including SSI increase, EISEP, EPIC outreach, and social model day care)
- Family and children's services issues (including advocacy for elimination of the Family and Children's Services Block Grant and advocacy with regard to implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act)
- Housing issues (including assisted living, state low income housing tax credits, and rural housing issues)
- Immigration issues (including farmworker rights, legalization of undocumented persons and healthcare for immigrants)
- Issues in services to mentally retarded persons (including opposition to the CORE bill, support for establishment of well qualified plans on managed care, and advocacy on issues in the NYS CARES program)
- Rural issues (including functioning of the State Office of Rural Affairs, New York State participation in the Northeast Compact and advocacy for the Rural Revitalization Act)

CHAPTER EIGHT

EARL EICHELBERGER 2001-2006 – “GETTING IT ALL TOGETHER”

A. Membership

Jack Balinsky served as Chairperson for the Council from July 1, 2001-June 30, 2003. Laura Cassell, who had served as Vice-Chairperson the previous two years, was elected as Chairperson for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2003. Dennis Manning, who had served as Vice-Chairperson the previous two years, was elected as Chairperson for a two year term beginning July 1, 2005. Robert Siebel was elected as Vice-Chairperson for the same period.

It should be noted also that during this time period, the voices of three new Diocesan Charities leaders were added to the work of the Council. Long time Brooklyn Catholic Charities leader Tom DeStefano was replaced by Robert Siebel as Diocesan Director in October 2001. In February 2003, Bishop Henry Mansell of Buffalo appointed two Catholic Charities veterans to leadership positions: Father Joe Sicari as Diocesan Director and Dennis Walczyk as Chief Executive Officer, and both became members of the Council.

Council members in this five-year period included:

Archdiocese of New York: Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, Joe Buttigieg, George Horton, Catherine Guerriero,

Albany: Sister Maureen Joyce, Karen Dehais, Richard Marini, Bill Przylucki, Mary Olsen, Martha Pofit

Brooklyn: Tom DeStefano, Bob Siebel, Carlo DeRege, Emmie Glynn Ryan, Donna Corrado

Buffalo: Monsignor Henry Gugino, Rev. Joseph Sicari, Dennis Walczyk, Sister Sharon Goodremote

Ogdensburg: Sister Donna Franklin, Trenton Clark, Claire Poirer, Kathleen Mathis

Rochester: Jack Balinsky, Tony Barbaro, Paul Pickering

Rockville Center: Laura Cassell, Paul Engelhart, David Nelson, John Bingham, Anthony Mullen

Syracuse: Dennis Manning, Paula Currie, Joe Slavik, Jane Coddington, Kathy Eichenlaub

B. Overview of Activities

1. Introduction

As reported in the previous chapter, efforts had been underway in the spring of 2001 to bring greater focus and efficiency to the work of the Council. These efforts culminated in a planning retreat held in Saratoga on August 28-29, 2001. At this session, the Council adopted a work plan for 2001-2002 that was also to serve as the basic model for their work during this time period. This chapter is organized according to the ten major areas of activity included in these work plans.

- Improve the function and structure of the Council as a constituent body of the New York State Catholic Conference
- Nurture the spiritual growth of the Council, committees and Charities staff

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- Develop a committee structure to educate and inform the deliberations of the Council in regard to matters of policy and the provision of service
- Advise the New York State Catholic Conference on matters of public policy
- Advocate for the Catholic Conference Legislative Agenda
- Recognize outstanding contributions to the Council and social justice
- Nurture relationships with the New York State Congressional Delegation
- Share information and support of Catholic Charities ministry
- Monitor status of issues of concern
- Develop, facilitate and implement joint program activities

And so, with efficient support from Council staff person David Hamilton, the Council moved to carry out its agenda in September 2001. Just as this plan was being initiated, changes occurred in rapid fashion, not the least of which was the terrorist attack of September 11th with all its ramifications. Internally, the Bishops had determined in January 2001 to undertake a study of the functioning of the Conference. There were concerns about Conference functioning and Conference finances. In the wake of this study, John Kerry resigned from his position as Conference Executive Director in July 2001. Richard Barnes, who had been on staff for several years as Legal Counsel to the Conference, was appointed as Interim Director of the Conference. Rick would take a stance of responsiveness to the Council. As the strategic planning process progressed, there was concern that funding for the Conference would be cut, and there might not be sufficient funding to maintain all of the Associate Director positions. In this environment, David Hamilton resigned effective November 16, 2001 to take a position with the Education Department in state government.

In response, at its October 23, 2001 meeting, the Council worked with Rick Barnes (who was officially appointed as Conference Director at the Bishop's January 2002 meeting) to develop a job description. At that meeting, it was agreed that the Conference would hire Paul Pickering on a two-day a week basis to provide staff support to the Council. Paul had worked in various positions in Catholic Charities of the Rochester Diocese since the late 1970's, the last twenty years as Executive Director of Catholic Charities Community Services. Paul had been a member of the Council briefly from January-June 1992, when he had served as interim Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities in Rochester. He had rejoined the Council as a representative from Rochester in 1993, and had served as Chair and later liaison to the Council Committee on Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled Persons.

His responsibilities for this interim period were to include:

- provide support to the Council and its subcommittees
- oversee analysis of the state budget
- provide analysis of legislative and regulatory proposals of concern to the Council
- engage in such other activities as needed to support the work of the Council

At the January 16, 2002 meeting, the Council approved a recommendation developed by Paul and Council Chair Jack Balinsky, that the committees be assigned three tasks for the remainder of the 2001-2002 program year:

- provide input on recommendations to the legislature about the Governor's proposed Executive budget
- participate in the Statewide Annual Convening with Father Bryan Hehir, the President of Catholic Charities USA, to be held on March 11, 2002
- in May, provide input into development of the 2003 legislative agenda

For the remainder of the spring, the Council maintained a minimal level of functioning through Paul's good efforts on a part-time basis.

Earl Eichelberger was hired as Associate Director of the Catholic Conference for Catholic Charities in early May 2002. He came to the Catholic Conference with a sound commitment to the Catholic Church and a wealth of experience with state government. Born and raised in Harlem, he received his Bachelor's Degree from LeMoyne College in Syracuse and his Masters Degree in Social Work from Syracuse University. He began his state career by working at various positions within the State Division for Youth and then served for 14 years as a member of the State Board of Parole. In the two years immediately prior to this hiring, Earl had worked in Albany as a lobbyist for New York City Council Chairperson Peter Vallone. Earl had participated in a Black Catholics group with the Albany Diocese and had also been affiliated with other Diocesan efforts in different areas around the state. He would bring to the Council an intelligence, experience, positive approach and flexibility that facilitated efforts already underway to enhance the effective functioning of the Council.

2. Council Structure and Functioning

At its retreat on August 29-30, 2001, the Council had adopted a work plan for the 2001-2002 year. As indicated above, with the resignation of David Hamilton, and then with staff support from Paul Pickering, the Council was able to carry out basic activities in this program year.

At the May 22, 2002 meeting, for the first time since the August 2001 retreat, the Council addressed structure and functioning issues. It agreed to again hold a planning retreat in Saratoga on September 3-4, 2002, which would include not only developing a work plan for 2002-2003, but would also address a possible covenant relationship among Diocesan Directors, would have a spiritual component, and would allow for a preliminary meeting to discuss common concerns about provision of services to Hispanic migrant farmworkers across the state. It was also agreed at this meeting to explore the possibility that two groups that had acted as Advisory Committees to the Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee would become committees of the Council.

Council Chairperson Jack Balinsky began the Council planning retreat on September 3, 2002 by giving his overview of the environment in which the Council would work during the year, focusing on these issues:

- the continuing effect of 9/11/01
- the priest sex abuse scandal
- a sagging economy
- likely war in Iraq
- a likely mid-year state budget crisis

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In addition to reaffirming the basic work plan and priorities adopted the previous year, the Council came to these agreements relative to the structure and functioning of the Council:

- there had been reached agreement with all parties that the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee would now become a committee of the Council
- it was agreed that Jack would write a new charge statement for the Family and Children's Services Committee
- it was agreed that John Bingham would write a new charge statement for the Immigration Committee
- it was agreed that the Rural Issues Committee would assume responsibility for addressing issues related to migrant farmworkers
- in response to a concern that had been raised by the Committee on Mentally Retarded Persons at the May 2002 Council meeting, it was agreed that Earl would develop a position statement on our policy with regard to joining coalitions
- it was reported that it had been determined that the Conference Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities should remain as an Advisory Committee to the Public Policy Committee and not merge with the Council Committee on Mentally Retarded Persons
- it was agreed that the Council would develop a brochure describing the work of Catholic Charities agencies in the state

At the planning retreat held on September 2-3, 2003, the Council once again reaffirmed the basic framework for the work of the Council. In addition these decisions were made:

- it was agreed that future leadership of the Council would be:
 - * 2003-2005 – Laura Cassell
 - * 2005-2007 – Dennis Manning
 - * 2007-2009 – Monsignor Kevin Sullivan
 - * 2009-2011 – Father Joe Sicari
- with regard to effectuating better relationships with state government officials, and enhancing participation at the Annual Human Services reception, it was agreed that the Council would invite to meetings Commissioners or Directors from these state agencies:
 - * Division of Housing and Community Renewal
 - * Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services
 - * Office of Children and Family Services
 - * Office of Mental Health
 - * Office of Aging
- Jack Balinsky reported that he, Earl and Walt Wojtowicz were embarking upon a project to develop a history of the State Catholic Conference, including organizing and digitizing the Charles Tobin files. Walt, who had had previous connectedness to the Albany Diocese Social Justice Commission and who was a retired engineer from General Electric, had become involved at the Catholic Conference as a volunteer to create the Council brochure envisioned the previous year. Having completed that project, he had expressed a willingness to assist with the Conference history project.
- it was agreed to send a letter to Committee Chairs outlining a framework for their work for the coming year, including:
 - * a fall meeting at which each committee would adopt a work plan for the coming year and make recommendations for the Governor's Executive budget proposal

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- * a winter meeting to review the Governor's Executive Budget, and make recommendations for the Conference's Omnibus budget letter to all Legislators
- * participation in the March 8, 2004 Statewide Annual Convening

- * a spring meeting, at which recommendations would be made for issues to be included in the 2005 Catholic Conference Legislative Agenda
- with regard to the Council and Conference legislative agenda, it was agreed that the Council would develop integrated, cross-cutting priorities relating to housing and behavioral health services

At the Planning Retreat held in Saratoga Springs on September 7-8, 2004, the Council once again affirmed the basic structure and functioning of the Council. In addition, the following items and discussed and decisions made:

- with regard to committee structure and functioning, the Council approved the continuation of the Standing Committees, and agreed to continue to invite Committee Chairs to Council meetings on a rotating basis, with an attempt to coordinate invitations with agenda topics and presentations by Agency Commissioners from related areas.
- there was agreement that the Council needed to identify a "specific ask" for advocacy efforts at both the state and federal level
- based upon a survey done by Buffalo Catholic Charities and a paper prepared by Jack Balinsky, there was discussion about the relationship between Catholic Charities and parishes.
- The Council established a committee comprised of George Horton, Anthony Mullen and Tony Barbaro to plan activities with social ministries representatives
- In a most important decision, the Council determined to recommend to the state Bishops that they develop a Pastoral Letter on Restoring the Covenant. It should be noted that the prime movers in developing this recommendation were Sister Donna Franklin from Ogdensburg, Laura Cassell from Rockville Centre and Sister Maureen Joyce from Albany.

At the Planning Retreat held in Saratoga Springs on September 6-7, 2005, the Council once again affirmed the structure and functioning of the Council. In addition, these important items were discussed and the following decisions made:

- there was lengthy discussion about how Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies were gearing up to respond to Hurricane Katrina which had devastated New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana and Mississippi the previous week. There was discussion about responding to the needs of residents from impacted areas who might be resettled in New York, as well as sending volunteers to distressed areas.
- It was agreed that leadership of the Council would be:
 - * 2005 – 2007 Dennis Manning
 - * 2007 – 2009 Robert Siebel
 - * 2009 – 2011 Sister Donna Franklin
 - * 2011 – 2013 Father Joseph Sicari
 - * 2013 – 2015 Sister Maureen Joyce
 - * 2015 – 2017 Monsignor Kevin Sullivan
 - * 2017 – 2019 Jack Balinsky

- * 2019 – 2021 Laura Cassell

(It was understood and anticipated that there would be personnel changes over the projected period convened by this rotation, but the order of rotation was established, with large diocese following by small diocese followed by large diocese.)

- It was agreed that the September 2006 Planning Retreat would be replaced by a longer meeting, with a planning segment, in May 2006
- With regard to committee functioning:
 - * the Council approved continuation of ten standing committees
 - * each committee was asked to focus on Restoring the Covenant with the Poor and Vulnerable Pastoral Letter as the theme for their work during the coming year

3. Nurturing Spiritual Growth

The Council undertook activities to nurture the spiritual growth of its members in these ways:

- at the August 2001 retreat, Bishop Hubbard from Albany gave presentations on the role of Catholic Charities and the qualities of a Catholic leader
- at each of the three subsequent Planning Retreats, Mass was celebrated
- it was agreed that Mass would be celebrated at one additional Council meeting each year
- Council members were assigned responsibility for the opening prayer at meetings on a rotating basis

4. Committees

The Council continued in this five year period to carry out much of its work through the efforts of its committees.

In terms of interaction between the Council and committee, it was reaffirmed at the 2002 Planning Retreat, that the goal was that at each meeting of the Council:

- there would be a presentation made by the Chairperson of a committee, and if possible a related presentation from the state government agency most closely associated with the work of that committee
- any Council member could raise for discussion any issue addressed by a committee as reported in the minutes of meetings which would be made available to Council members
- any committee liaison could raise an issue from the work of his/her committee for discussion and decision by the Council

Highlights of Committee activity in this five years are as follows:

During 2003-2004, the Behavioral Health Committee took the lead role in developing an integrated legislative agenda for behavioral health services. Through the work of the Committee, the Council had meetings with OMH Commissioner Jim Stone on January 15, 2003 and OMH Commissioner Sharon Carapinello on February 16, 2005. During spring of 2006, the Committee spearheaded successful advocacy for Timothy's Law.

The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee had been established in 1975 as an Advisory Committee to the State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee. For a variety of reasons, it was agreed that the group would become a committee of the Council effective September 2002. It adopted this statement of purpose in fall 2002:

The Criminal Justice Committee will advise the NYS Catholic Conference and the Public Policy Committee in the area of criminal justice issues. The application of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching to the criminal justice system is central to the work of the committee. The first principle, the “dignity of every human being” is of particular import when discussing the treatment of criminal offenders. The committee advances the concept of “Restorative Justice” and an emphasis on compassion and forgiveness. Inspired by the example of Jesus, the committee strives to support policies that seek “to restore all to the wholeness and fullness of life”. The committee will promote action on behalf of the church and public sector that is of benefit to victims, offenders and society as a whole.

Throughout this time period, the Committee continued to advocate for reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws, expansion of alternatives to incarceration and better living conditions and services for prisoners who were mentally ill. The Committee facilitated a presentation at the November 30, 2005 Council meeting by State Director of Criminal Justice Chauncey Parker.

Throughout this time period, the primary focus of the Elderly Services Committee was on assisted living and implementation of the Olmstead Laws.

The Family and Children’s Services Committee was newly reconstituted in early 2003. The charge to the Committee was:

“The Family and Children’s Services Committee will focus upon neighborhood and community-based services for children and their family. The committee will identify and advocate for issues related to access to health care, day care, early intervention, hunger and nutrition outreach, delinquency prevention, and other programs that provide service to poor and vulnerable families.”

The Committee on Government Relations was formed out of discussion at the February 22, 2006 Council meeting about how the Council could best focus and prioritize its advocacy efforts. It was comprised of Sister Sharon Goodremote, George Horton, Anthony Mullen and Martha Pofit. At the April 5, 2006 meeting, the Council adopted the following as the Purpose of the Committee:

“The purpose of the Committee is to recommend to the Council the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a strategic plan for accomplishment of the public policy agenda of the Council. The Committee will work in close relationship with the Council Committees and Executive Secretary of the Council (ESC). The GRC will be a resource for information, background material, issue papers and reports necessary for accomplishment of the agenda. The GRC will monitor legislative and budgetary developments during the course of the legislative year, including federal aspects of state issues as communicated by CCUSA and the USCCB, and make recommendations to the Council on how to respond, including activation of the Catholic Advocacy Network (CAN) and Diocesan legislative networks where appropriate.

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At the May 17, 2006 meeting, the Council accepted the Committee's recommendation on an advocacy timetable.

Throughout this time period, the newly formed HIV/AIDS Committee struggled to find its purpose and agenda.

The three major accomplishments of the Housing Committee during this time period, were presenting testimony on July 31, 2002 to the Congressional Committee on Affordable Housing and Healthcare for the 21st century, developing an agenda for assisted living which was the focus for a joint meeting with the Healthcare Council on August 3, 2002, and taking the lead in developing an integrated, cross-cutting housing agenda during the 2003-2004 program year. The Committee facilitated a presentation at the January 14, 2004 Council meeting by DHCR Commissioner Judy Colagero.

During 2001-2002, the Immigration Committee was heavily focused on funding decisions by state government for immigration programs. Thereafter, a revitalized committee under the leadership of John Bingham from Rockville Centre focused more on migrant and legalization issues, including advocacy focus in 2003-2004 to the Ag Jobs Bill and the DREAM Act.

The Committee on Mentally Retarded Persons continued to have a strong and positive relationship with Commissioner Tom Maul from the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, focusing on such issues as the Healthcare Decisions Act for Persons with Mental Retardation, HIPAA and the OPTS initiative.

At the September 2004 Planning Retreat, the Council determined to convene those involved in Social Ministry. At a meeting held in Albany of May 14, 2005, there was agreement that the information shared was helpful, but it was reaffirmed that the structures of Dioceses were so different that it would be difficult for such a group to have a common purpose and agenda.

Tim McMahon from Rochester, the Chairperson of the Rural Issues Committee made a presentation to the New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee on Rural Issues in May 2002, thus helping to raise the visibility of rural issues within the over-all work of the conference. At its December 4, 2002 meeting, the Council heard presentations from CITA - a migrant advocacy group, and the State Farm Bureau, and met with Nathan Rudgers, Commissioner of the State Department of Agriculture, and subsequently determined to intensify its advocacy issues on migrant and immigrant issues.

During this time period, the name of the Welfare Reform Committee changed to the Economic Justice and Income Security Committee. The Committee continued the tradition of Catholic Conference advocacy on income security by preparing a statement for the state Bishops' in July 2002 urging adoption of an increased state minimum wage. Following on publication of the State Bishops' Pastoral on Restoring the Covenant with the Poor and Vulnerable, the Committee presented at the April 6, 2005 meeting a comprehensive plan for education of Catholics about the Pastoral. The committee also facilitated presentations by Bob Doar, the Director of the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance at Council meetings on March 31, 2004 and April 6, 2005.

5. Support to the New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee

The Council provided support to the State Public Policy Committee by annually providing input into developing the Conference legislative agenda, identifying targeted objectives for the Public Policy Forum, and providing advice on agenda items discussed at Public Policy meetings.

- with regard to the legislative agenda and targeted objectives, they remained during this time frame basically the same as those outlined in the previous Chapter
- with regard to input into specific agenda items:
 - * at the September 6, 2001 meeting, the Council recommended approval of a Bishop's Statement on Welfare Reform, as the five-year time limit for federal eligibility approached (adopted)
 - * at the same meeting, the Council recommended support for inclusion of legal immigrants in the Family Health Plus program (adopted) and the Council proposed recommendations for TANF reauthorization
 - * the Council organized a special issues presentation on agriculture issues by representatives of the Farm Bureau, (Kevin Bauman and Julie Suarez) at the May 23, 2002 meeting
 - * on behalf of the Council, Jack Balinsky gave a presentation on Rural Issues at the annual meeting of the Public Policy Committee with the Bishops of the state held on June 21, 2002 addressing these rural issues:
 - + rural character of New York State
 - + Public Policy Committee priorities
 - flexibility in service delivery
 - transportation
 - housing and economic development issues
 - Medicaid dental rates
 - + migrant issues
 - + Farm Bureau involvement and issues
 - * At the December 4, 2002 meeting, the Council recommended that there be future special issues presentations on environmental justice issues (accepted) and educational equality (not accepted)
 - * Kathy Dubel from Rochester Catholic Charities made a special issues presentation at the April 10, 2003 meeting which led to the strengthening of this priority within the Catholic Conference legislation agenda
 - * The Public Policy Committee approved at its May 22, 2003 meeting, re-establishment of the Advisory Committee on Government Fiscal Policies at the recommendation of the Council
 - * The Public Policy Committee accepted at its September 9, 2004 meeting the recommendation of the Council that the state Bishops develop a Pastoral Letter on the Covenant with the Poor and Vulnerable. This pastoral letter was issued at the March 8, 2005 New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Forum and was to become a major focus of Conference advocacy for the remainder of 2005 and for 2006. Catholic Charities USA used this statement as a model for its policy statement on poverty adopted in Minneapolis in September 2006

- * At the December 2, 2004 Public Policy Committee meeting, the Council urged that the Catholic Conference engage in strong advocacy on the unresolved issues relating to the Governor's budget vetoes of human services items. This recommendation was accepted.
- * At the April 6, 2006 meeting, the Council recommended unsuccessfully that the Conference take a position of "no position" on proposed No-Fault Divorce legislation

6. Advocacy for Legislative Agenda

Throughout this time frame, the Council engaged in many advocacy activities in support of the Conference legislative agenda.

The most consistent and concrete advocacy came through advocacy for targeted objectives at the Public Policy Forum, where Catholic Charities leadership played a major role in organizing participation.

Catholic Charities leadership was also involved in a series of meetings with top state government leaders at these sessions.

7. Annual Human Services Convening; Awards

During this time period, the Council resumed the practice of conjoining the Statewide Annual Convening, Annual Health and Human Services Reception and presentation of the Mugavero and DeFazio Awards.

At the Statewide Annual Convening held at the Convention Center on March 12, 2002, Father Bryan Hehir, CCUSA President delivered the keynote address, Sharon Daly from CCUSA gave a workshop on lobbying, each committee made a presentation on their priorities to the group as a whole, and committees met with appropriate legislative committees relative to budget priorities. Father Hehir and the Diocesan Charities Directors were introduced at an Assembly session.

On March 11, 2003, March 9, 2004, March 7, 2005 and March 13, 2006, the Statewide Annual Convening was held at the Crown Plaza.

On March 11, 2003, presentations on the state fiscal situation were given by Frank Mauro from the Fiscal Policy Institute and Rus Sykes from the SCAA, and there were committee presentations as well. The day concluded with at reflection by Monsignor Kevin Sullivan.

At the March 9, 2004 session, the keynote address on Faithful Citizenship was given by John Carr from the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. As a step toward developing an integrated legislative agenda around housing and behavioral health issues, during the breakout sessions, representatives of those committees met respectively with the other committees to get input for the developing agenda. Once again, there were then presentations by each committee to the group as a whole.

At the March 7, 2005 session, the keynote presentation was given by Diana Hayes, a noted social justice advocate, on the covenant with the poor and vulnerable.

At the March 13, 2006 session, the keynote presentation was given by Father Larry Snyder, the recently named Director of Catholic Charities USA, on Catholic Charities commitment to the covenant with the poor and vulnerable.

In general, the Council felt very pleased with these sessions organized by a committee chaired by Tony Barbaro, and including Bob Siebel and Kathy Eichenlaub.

In each year, the Annual receptions were held in the late afternoon of the day of the convening. In 2002, the event was held at the Catholic Conference office, the other four years at the Crown Plaza. In each year, the evaluation was that we had to work harder to gain greater state government participation, that we needed to tighten the focus of our presentations, and that we should continue to review whether this was the right venue for award presentations.

Council awards were given as follows:

2002 Mugavero Award: Sharon Daly, Catholic Charities USA

2002 DeFazio Award: Maura Welch, Syracuse teen and activist on child labor issues

2003 Mugavero Award: Tom DeStefano, retired Brooklyn Diocesan Director

2003 DeFazio Award: Margaret Driscoll, Rochester Diocese Catholic Worker activist

2004 Mugavero Award: Monsignor Robert Lawler, longtime Ogdensburg Director

2004 DeFazio Award: Monsignor William Toohy, Archdiocese Charities Attorney (former supervisor of Vinnie DeFazio)

2005 Mugavero Award: Bishop Howard Hubbard, Bishop of Albany

2005 DeFazio Award: Kathy Dubel, Justice and Peace Coordinator, Southern Tier, Rochester Diocese

2006 Mugavero Award: Bishop Matthew Clark, Diocese of Rochester

2006 DeFazio Award: Sister Mary Ann Weldon, retired Parish Social Ministry Director, Diocese of Buffalo

8. Congressional Delegation Meetings

The Council determined in its planning retreat in September 2002 to reinstitute its practice from the 1980's of organizing an annual Congressional Delegation meeting in Washington.

The first such session was held on May 15, 2003. The Council had "off the floor" meetings with Senators Schumer and Clinton because the Senate that day was engaged in "votarama" on the President's tax cut proposals. Through the good offices of Monsignor Kevin Sullivan and his connection with state Congressional Delegation Dean Charlie Rangel, the Council hosted a breakfast in the Capitol for members of our Congressional Delegation, focusing on these issues: TANF reauthorization, Medicaid, housing, and immigration and Medicaid.

The Council returned to Washington on February 11, 2004. There were more productive "in-office" meetings with Senators Clinton and Schumer. The Council made presentations on

housing, TANF, immigration and Medicaid at a “mandatory” delegation meeting essentially hijacked by New York City Mayor Bloomberg.

On April 27, 2005, the Council, again with the support of staff from Catholic Charities USA returned to Washington for a Congressional delegation session that was poorly attended. Presentations were again made on TANF, immigration, Medicaid and Housing. Individual meetings with Senators Clinton and Schumer were more productive.

On March 7, 2006, the Council changed its strategy for its Washington event. Full Council meetings were again scheduled with Senators Clinton and Schumer. Senator Schumer did not attend because he felt “he had met with the Catholics” in February when the Social Ministry delegates visited. Senator Clinton was most cordial in her meeting. Rather than try to schedule a meeting with our delegation from the House of Representatives, individual Diocesan representatives visited their Congressional representatives. The same four issues were addressed as the previous year, again with support from CCUSA. These sessions were enhanced by the presence of Martha Pofit from Albany Catholic Charities, who had spent the fall of 2005 as a loaned staff executive at Catholic Charities USA.

Attached as Appendix IV is a document developed for this meeting which gives a good overview of the current work of Catholic Charities throughout New York State.

9. Information and Support

The Council engaged in several activities in this area of concern:

- there were several meetings and conference calls addressing issues in relation to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development including:
 - * inter-diocesan proposals
 - * role of Diocesan Director with CCHD staff
 - * proposals that come from more than one Diocese
- Sister Maureen Joyce and Jack Balinsky met with MECF staff to clarify the relationship between the Council and the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation.
- The Council had two sessions with representatives of the Diocesan attorneys
 - * at the session held on January 16, 2002, issues addressed included: the lobby law (there was agreement that there should be a uniform state approach), Charitable immunity legislation, and discussion of the Attorney General’s proposed bills on regulations for not-for-profit agencies.
 - * at the session held on January 15, 2003, there were presentations on background checks in light of the Charter for Protection for Children and Youth adopted by the Bishops of the United States the previous July, the lobby law, Charities registration, and litigation submitted in the wake of passage in the previous year of the Women’s Health and Wellness bill with a narrow conscience clause.

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- based upon a conference call with Rochester attorney Mike Cooney on October 6, 2003 and a training session held on January 14, 2004, it was determined that Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies would register under the lobby law
- there was discussion at the May 26, 2004 Council meeting about parish social ministry and relationships to parishes, based upon a survey undertaken by Buffalo Catholic Charities and follow-up activities they had undertaken.

10. Issues Monitoring

Often on the agenda during this time period were reviews of the status of these ongoing issues:

- the Women's Health and Wellness Bill
This major issue requires elaboration. Stretching back to 1998, there had been considerable debate over this legislation, which contained many positive features enhancing coverage for women's health issues from the perspective of the State Catholic Conference. Unfortunately, however, the bill contained a mandate that employers providing prescription drug coverage must include contraceptive coverage. As with other legislation, there was provision for a "conscience clause" that would exempt employers for whom this provision would be morally objectionable. The debate turned on the scope of the conscience clause.

It was this debate that brought the first formal visit, in May 2001, of Edward Cardinal Egan from New York to Albany to lobby for the Church position. (He had been appointed in May 2000 to replace Cardinal O'Connor.) The Catholic Conference continued to be able to avert passage of this legislation during the 2001 session.

In 2002, however, with the Church position, weakened by the national sex abuse scandal, the bill was passed and signed with a narrow conscience clause. Dioceses, parishes and some Catholic schools would be exempt from mandatory provision of contraceptive coverage, but Catholic Charities agencies and Catholic hospitals would not. This was a major defeat for Catholic Conference advocacy. Litigation was filed on December 31, 2002 through work done by Catholic Conference attorneys. At this writing, after a negative Supreme Court decision and Appellate Court decision (by a 3-2 vote), this matter is now before the highest Court in New York State, the Court of Appeals.

- Surrogate Decision-Making
- Faith-based initiatives
- In the wake of the child abuse scandal, consideration of legislation to retroactively create a moratorium on the statutes of limitations in civil cases relating to child sex abuse.

11. Joint Activities

The Council engaged in two joint activities in this time period:

- On October 22, 2001, in Utica, there was a joint meeting with the Catholic Healthcare Council.

- In the context of the Joint National meeting of Catholic Charities USA and the Catholic Health Association held in Chicago in early August 2002, there was a joint “affinity” session which focused on assisted living policy priorities.

C. Public Policy Advocacy

During this time period, the Council focused on major public policy issues, including:

- Economic security priorities (including promoting “Restoring the Covenant”, use of TANF surplus funds, raising the minimum wage and the Flexible Fund for Families initiative)
- Health care priorities (including the Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus programs, and advocating for increased access to health care insurance).
- Behavioral health priorities (including World Trade Center aftermath, HIPAA, Geriatric Mental Health Act, and Timothy’s Law)
- Criminal justice priorities (including reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws, alternatives to incarceration, treatment of mentally ill prisoners, and telephone accessibility for prisoners)
- Elderly service issues (including PACE, assisted living, and implementation of Olmstead Laws)
- Family and children’s service issues (including family mediation, independent living, Children’s Advocacy Network and Medicaid)
- HIV/AIDS issues
- Housing issues (including assisted living issues, funding for development of affordable housing, rural housing issues, and implementation of Olmstead Laws)
- Immigration issues (including national campaign for Immigrant Justice and the Ag Jobs bill)
- Issues relating to services to mentally retarded persons, (including Healthcare Decisions Act for Persons with Mental Retardation, HIPAA issues, the OPTS initiative, and Medicare Part D)
- A potpourri of rural issues
- Welfare reform issues (including TANF reauthorization, TANF surplus funds, and the Flexible Fund for Families)

CONCLUSION: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COUNCIL IN RETROSPECT

It is impossible to detail, or even to know, the many ways in which the work of the Council enhanced Catholic Charities efforts and influenced public policy in New York State. Certainly, meetings, legislative memoranda, budget letters, grassroots advocacy had impact in many, many ways throughout the history of the Council. These efforts were integrated with and enhanced by the efforts of the Bishops, the State Catholic Conference Public Policy Committee, other Conference constituent groups and Catholic Conference staff.

As illustrative of the work of the work of the Council, described here are several major successes achieved by the Council over the last forty years. Economic security, public assistance and welfare reform issues were always at the heart of the work of the Council and are described here in some detail.

Economic Security, Public Assistance and Welfare Reform

Standing by itself as the central accomplishment of the Council has been advocacy for economic security. A central principle of Catholic Social Teaching is “a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable”. Hence, it is fitting that the major consistent focus of the Council over its entire forty year history has been on issues relating to economic security, public assistance and welfare reform. This has been an area of the Council’s greatest successes.

In 1967, the Catholic Charities Directors advocated successfully in deliberations at the Constitutional Convention to retain in the Constitution the clause that required the state to pay an adequate standard of need, as well as to preserve the role of the State Board of Social Welfare. (It should be noted that when the powers of the State Board were diminished in the early 1970’s, the legislature immediately reduced the standard of need by 10 percent.)

At the recommendation of the Council, the Bishops issued a pastoral letter on poverty in the fall of 1969. This letter was read in parishes on the weekend of December 7, 1969.

On January 7, 1970, Council representatives met with Governor Nelson Rockefeller to discuss proposals for a public assistance flat grant and his Universal Healthcare Proposal.

A decade later, inspired by the Council, the State Coalition for Fair Public Assistance mounted a successful two year effort which resulted in a 15 percent increase on the basic public assistance grant effective July 1, 1981. This coalition was then transformed into the Statewide Emergency Network for Social and Economic Security (SENSES) which still today is at the heart of advocacy for the poor and vulnerable at the state and federal level.

In 1989, Council and Conference advocacy was instrumental in the decision by Governor Cuomo to again increase the basic grant by 15 percent in the 1989-1990 state budget.

As documented in this history, much of the work of the Council in 1990-1992 was directed toward mitigating proposed state budget cuts that affected poor people.

History of NYSCCD 1966-2006

On April 13, 1995, at the recommendation of the Council, given that the welfare reform debate was heating up at the federal level, the Bishops of the State issued a Statement on Principles to Guide Welfare Reform.

A significant moment in the history of the Council came in September 1995, when assisted by Sharon Daly from Catholic Charities USA, four Bishops and four Council members met with Senators Moynihan and D'Amato off the floor of the Senate during the final Senate debate on welfare reform. The following week, Senator Moynihan read into the Congressional Record a commendation for the Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities for their consistent advocacy over thirty years for the poor and vulnerable.

Following enactment of federal legislation debate about welfare reform turned to implementation at the state level. On February 4, 1997, the Catholic Conference participated in a joint statement "Religious Leaders Respond to New York Works", the administration's Welfare Reform program. On May 29, 1997, the Catholic Bishops issued another statement on welfare reform, again emphasizing the six principles articulated two years earlier, and relating them to the current debate. Clearly, the Catholic Conference had a significant impact on this major debate.

After the passage of state welfare reform legislation, the Council continued to advocate annually for appropriate use of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) surplus funds.

With the advent of the five year time limit when some families would no longer be eligible for federal benefits, the State Bishops issued on September 28, 2001 a statement "An Urgent Plea for our State's Poor and Vulnerable from the Catholic Bishops of New York State", advocating for appropriate state support of the safety net.

Finally, from their September 2004 Planning Retreat, the Charities Directors recommended that the Bishops issue another statement on the poor and vulnerable. This statement, "The New York State Bishops' Pastoral on Restoring the Covenant with the Poor and Vulnerable" issued at the Public Policy Forum on March 8, 2005 became the centerpiece of Conference and Council advocacy in 2005 and 2006. It also served as a model for a statement on poverty adopted by Catholic Charities USA at the national meeting in Minneapolis in September 2006.

The details of this remarkable, consistent advocacy for the poor and vulnerable can be found throughout this history.

Beyond this central focus, there have been several other major accomplishments. Described here roughly in chronological order, are **ten** major Council achievements.

1. Child Care

The earliest Catholic charitable activity in the United States, beginning in the mid-1800's, was care of dependent children. Over the years, the state began to fund this activity. There was also great focus on placing children in facilities based on their religion.

A major focus of Council activity in the late 1960's and early 1970's, was monitoring developments in the Wilder v Bernstein case contesting the right of Catholic institutions to put restrictions on availability of Family Planning Services, and other related issues.

That ultimately these issues were worked out successfully enabled the Catholic Church to continue in this service, very central to the mission of the Church.

2. Deinstitutionalization

The Council and individual Catholic Charities agencies played a major role in advocating for and implementing the deinstitutionalization of mentally retarded persons and persons with mental illness from large state institutions.

In the 1974 gubernatorial campaign, the Catholic Conference joined with many other advocacy groups in urging Hugh Carey to move in this direction if he were elected Governor.

Following his election, he signed the Willowbrook Consent Decree in 1976.

Led by Monsignor Tom Cribbin of Brooklyn Catholic Charities, leaders across the state were instrumental in developing policies for community-based services and establishing programs for persons with mental retardation.

On December 1, 1980, the Catholic Conference issued a “Statement on the Care and Treatment of Those Suffering from Mental Illness”, as a way to help facilitate deinstitutionalization of this population.

Under the leadership of Monsignor Charles Fahey in Syracuse, Catholic Charities agencies became the core administrators in Broome County and Oneida County of the community support system (CCS) initiative initiated by the state on November 1, 1979.

3. Revenue Issues

Joining an approach evolving with other advocacy groups, the Council successfully advocated in 1983 within the Conference for establishment of an Advisory Committee on Government Fiscal Affairs, as a group that could advise the Bishops and Catholic Conference on revenue and tax policy, based on the premise that the income side of the state budget was a moral document just as was the expense side.

Through the work of this committee and the leadership of Bishop Joseph Sullivan on Governor Cuomo’s Council on Fiscal and Economic Priorities, the state included within its 1985 tax reform legislation provision that no household below the federal poverty level should have to pay state income tax. This one provision enabled poor families in the state to gain \$400 million annually in revenues they did not have to pay the state.

Further tax reform legislation enacted in the state in 1987, again on the recommendation of the Catholic Conference and through the good work of Bishop Sullivan, saved poor people an additional \$100 million annually.

4. Safe, Affordable Housing

For more than twenty five years, the Council has been in the forefront of advocacy for public policies to enhance the development of safe, affordable housing for low income individuals and families, senior citizens and special needs population.

Three major successes are of note.

The State Rural Housing Coalition, through the strong leadership of Al Velto from Catholic Charities in Ogdensburg, was instrumental in the passage of the Rural Rental Assistance Act, signed into law by Governor Carey on August 8, 1982, which provided \$7.6 million in rental assistance for projects developed through the FHA 515 program.

In the mid 1980's, the Council, with strong leadership from Monsignor Don Sakano of the Archdiocese, played a significant role in the creation of the Homeless Housing Assistance Program, the Housing Trust Fund and the Affordable Home Ownership Program. Together with now the Low Income Housing Investment Tax Credit program, these three programs remain the major vehicles for production of safe, affordable housing in New York State.

During the 2003-2004 program year, the Housing Committee developed, in concert with other Council Committees, a comprehensive, integrated housing agenda that formed the basis of advocacy at the state and federal level.

5. Teen Pregnancy Services

The Catholic Conference and Council have devoted considerable advocacy over the years to enhance service delivery to pregnant teens.

Through the work of a Conference Ad Hoc Committee for Programs and Services for Pregnant Women, the Public Policy Committee adopted at its January 16, 1978 meeting an aggressive advocacy agenda for these services.

In the wake of an additional allocation that year to Family Planning Advocates, aggressive advocacy by the Conference led to creation of the APPS program (Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services) by Governor Cuomo in 1984.

In similar fashion, advocacy in 1988 led to creation of the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation, funded through the State Department of Health, which still today is a major funding vehicle for these services.

In its final report to the Council on February 1, 1995, the Council Special Task Force on Pregnant and Parenting Teens recommended to the Council a comprehensive advocacy agenda in light of welfare reform.

6. Rural Issues

The Council Rural Issues Committee was organized in September, 1, 1984 in response to the State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. Over the next two years, it developed responses to

all the policy papers of the Commission touching every facet of rural life. It was Catholic Conference lobbyist Father Ken Doyle who was largely responsible for passage in the Assembly in June 1988, of legislation created by the State Office of Rural Affairs as recommended by the Rural Issues Committee and Council. (See Appendix V)

7. HIV/AIDS

The Annual Human Resources reception was often a vehicle through which individual Charities Directors and government officials had discussions which led to subsequent program development.

Probably the most significant outcome from any Annual Reception occurred as a result of discussion at the 1987 reception. The previous Sunday there had appeared in the New York Times an article about the so-called Boarder Babies who lived in a children's ward at a New York hospital, because they had been born to mothers who were drug addicted or HIV positive and had no one to care for them.

Sister Maureen Joyce, Director of Community Maternity Services, read the article and decided Albany Catholic Charities could do something about this. She and Sister Serena first buttonholed DSS Commissioner Cesar Perales who referred them to Health Commissioner Doctor David Axelrod, since the children were in a hospital setting.

The response was immediate and overwhelming. Soon, more than 200 Boarder Babies were in foster care situations with families in Albany through Catholic Charities.

The situation for children who were HIV positive was somewhat different. Inspired by a meeting with Doctor Margaret Haggerty, head of the children's unit at the hospital, Sister Maureen determined that Catholic Charities could take on that challenge also. With wonderful support from an older woman neighbor, Catholic Charities purchased and gained permission to open a six-bed agency operated boarding home for children who were HIV positive. All this came to pass in less than a year. Some of these youngsters are living as young adults today. Many died of AIDS, but are warmly remembered and had a quality of life that would have been impossible had it not been for the risk-taking leadership of Sister Maureen and Sister Serena.

8. Elderly Services

The Elderly Services Committee of the Council was especially effective in the late 1980's under the effective leadership of Mary Jo Giambellica of Buffalo. The Council received an advocacy award from the State Office of Aging in May 1988, as a result of its effective advocacy for a \$40 million increase in the SSI program, and for enhancements of EISEP (Expanded In-Home Services to the Elderly Program).

9. Drug and Alcohol Services

Through the leadership of John Coppola from Albany, the Drug and Alcohol Services Committee came into being in September 1986. While the Committee recommended advocacy priorities relating to state government, its primary focus was internal Church education. Its efforts culminated with a comprehensive paper on ways the Church could become involved in responding

to drug and alcohol abuse presented at the Statewide Annual Convening in 1989, and issuance of a Bishops' Pastoral, and then a larger conference for Church representatives in June 1990, at which the keynote speaker was Lieutenant Governor Stan Lundine. This conference spurred the creation of the DuLac Community Development Corporation through which Jack Balinsky worked to create Church-based education and treatment programs throughout the state.

10. Healthcare - Fidelis

Throughout its history, the Council advocated for improved access to healthcare, in its own right, and together with the Conference and Healthcare Council.

One important advocacy success was made possible by Council staff person Joe Buttigieg. The last night of session in 1995, when the legislature was considering a bill to implement Medicaid Managed Care in the state, Joe proposed a solution that would allow exemption from required provision of contraceptive services. A year later Conference staff person Richard Barnes was instrumental in achieving a similar result in the enactment of more permanent legislation.

These two victories made possible the creation of Fidelis Care of New York.

Obviously, there were many other areas of public policy advocacy in which the Council engaged, and many other battles and successes even with the issues areas identified here.

Through this advocacy activity and work in other Dioceses, the Charities Directors remained truly "a voice for hope" for the poor and vulnerable.



NEW YORK STATE CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

465 STATE STREET • ALBANY, NY 12203-1004 • TEL. (518) 434-6195 • FAX (518) 434-9796

www.nyscatholicconference.org

Appendix I

History of Catholic Charities Directors

Archdiocese of New York

Msgr. Robert F. Keegan 1920-1947
Msgr. Patrick A. O'Boyle 1947-1948
Msgr. Christopher J. Weldon 1948-1950
Msgr. James J. Lynch 1950-1956
Msgr. George Guilfoyle 1956-1966
Msgr. Edward D. Head 1966-1973
Msgr. James J. Murray 1973-2001
Msgr. Kevin L. Sullivan 2001-

Diocese of Albany

Rev. Vincent DePaul Archambault 1914-1917
Rev. Joseph Scully 1917-1926
Rev. William C. Keane 1926-1945
Rev. John G. Hart 1945-1953
Rev. Wilfred Chamberlain 1953-1957
Rev. John R. Sise 1957-1968
Rev. Richard J. Downs 1968-1974
Sister Serena Branson, D.C 1974-1990
Sister Maureen Joyce, RSM 1990-

Diocese of Brooklyn

Rev. William J. Rice 1899-1911
Rev. Francis J. O'Hara 1911-1930
Rev. J. Jerome Reddy 1930-1960
Rev. Francis J. Mugavero 1960-1968
Rev. Joseph M. Sullivan 1968-1979
Thomas A. DeStefano 1979-2002
Robert L. Siebel 2002-

Diocese of Buffalo

Rt. Rev. Msgr. John C. Carr 1923 - 1934
Rev. William H. Meegan 1934 - 1938
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Eugene A. Loftus, P.A. 1939 - 1953
Rt. Rev. Msgr. William L. Wozniak 1953 - 1965
Rev. Msgr. John J. Conniff, P.A. 1965 - 1995
Rev. Msgr. Henry J. Gugino 1995 - 2002

History of NYSCCD
1966-2006

Diocese of Ogdensburg

Msgr. James J. Lacey - 1922 to 1942
 Msgr. Joseph F. Luker - 1942 to 1959
 Msgr. Robert L. Lawler, P.A.- 1959 to 1986
 Rev. Stephen Gratto - 1986 to 1994
 Pamela Wilson (Interim) - 1994 to 1995
 Sr. Donna M. Franklin, D.C. - 1995 to present

Diocese of Rochester

Rev. Walter A Foery 1930 to 1937
 Msgr. Gerald C. Lambert 1937 to 1952
 Rev. Arthur Ratigan 1952 to 1963
 Msgr. Donald Mulcahy 1963 to 1971
 Rev. William Charbonneau 1971 to 1973
 Rev. Joseph D'Aurizo 1973 to 1977
 Rev. Charles Mulligan 1977 to 1985, Diocesan Director, Office of Social Ministry
 Rev. John Firpo 1985 to 1991, Diocesan Director, Office of Social Ministry
 Paul Pickering 1991 to 1992, interim Diocesan Director, Office of Social Ministry
 Jack Balinsky 1992 to present, Diocesan Director, Catholic Charities

Diocese of Rockville Centre

(Rev.Msgr.) Charles E. Bermingham, Diocesan Director 1957 - 1965
 (Rev.Msgr.) Edward L. Melton, Diocesan Director 1965 - 1967
 (Rev.Msgr.) Gerald J. Ryan, Diocesan Director 1967 - 1970
 (Rev.Msgr.) Robert Emmet Fagan, Diocesan Director 1970 - 1983
 a. Joseph S. Barbaro, Executive Director 1976 - 1982
 b. Joseph J. Kowalchik, Executive Director 1983 - 1985
 (Rev.Msgr.) John D. Gilmartin, Diocesan Director 1985 - 1999
 a. Paul E. Kirdahy, Ph.D., Executive Director 1986 - 1991
 b. Daniel J. McGowan, Executive Director 1991 - 1995
 Laura A. Cassell, CEO 1999 to present

Diocese of Syracuse

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Alexis L. Hopkins 1923 - 1929
 Rev. Edward J. Davern 1929 - 1933
 Rev. J. James Bannon 1933 - 1942
 Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph B. Toomey 1943 - 1958
 Rt. Rev. Msgr. Daniel E. Lawler 1958 - 1967
 Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles J. Fahey 1967 - 1979
 Rt. Rev. Msgr. Ronald C. Bill 1979 - 1987
 Rev. Robert B. Stephenson 1987 - 1999
 Mr. Dennis J. Manning 1999 to present

Appendix II

The Ballad of Sigmund Freud (as written by Msgr. John Conniff)

Well it started in Vienna not so many years ago,
When not enough of folks were getting very sick,
That a starving young physician,
Tried to better his condition,
By discerning what made his patients tick,
He adopted as his credo: down repressing, up libido,
And that was the start of Sigmund Freud.

CHORUS

Oh, Dr. Freud! Oh, Dr. Freud!
How we wish you had been differently employed,
But the set of circumstances still enhances the finances,
Of the followers of Dr. Sigmund Freud.

Well they analyzed the dreams of the teens and libertines,
They substituted monologue for pills,
And instead of toting bed pans,
They wore analytic dead pans,
Those ambitious Doctors Adler, Jung, and Freud.

CHORUS

Well the big three have departed, but not the cult they started,
It is being carried on by a goodly band,
And to trauma, shock, and war shock,
Someone's gone and added Rorshack,
And the thing has got completely out of hand.

Appendix III

September 2006

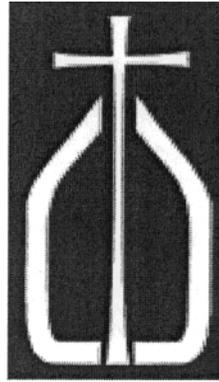
**COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIRECTORS
AWARDS RECIPIENTS**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bishop Mugavero Award</u>	<u>Vinnie DeFazio Award</u>
1989	Bishop Francis Mugavero	
1990	Sister Serena Branson	
1991	No Awards Given	
1992	Monsignor Charles Fahey	Ms. Millie Shanley
1993	No Awards Given	
1994	Mr. Robert McAuliffe	Monsignor Thomas Cribbin
1995	Monsignor John Conniff	Mr. Paul Sauerland
1996	Bishop Joseph Sullivan	Mary Ann Dantuono
1997	No Awards Given	
1998	Monsignor James Murray	
1999	Monsignor. John Gilmartin	Mr. Maurice Tierney
2000	No Awards Given	
2001	Sr. Una McCormack	Ms. Mary Jo Giambelluca
2002	Ms. Sharon Daly	Ms. Maura Welch
2003	Mr. Thomas DeStefano	Ms. Margaret Driscoll
2004	Monsignor Robert Lawler	Monsignor William Toohey
2005	Bishop Howard Hubbard	Ms. Kathy Dubel
2006	Bishop Matthew Clark	Sister Mary Ann Weldon

The

Appendix IV

Catholic Charities



of

New York State

***Providing Help and Creating Hope for New Yorkers Regardless
of Race, Ethnicity, Religion or Ability to Pay From Montauk
Point to Niagara Falls and Every Community In-Between***

Prepared by:

The New York State Catholic Conference

Council of Catholic Charities Directors

Date: March 2006



Catholic Charities of New York State

The Catholic Church's commitment to serving the poor and vulnerable is a direct response to the Gospel. Such service by the Church in this country predates the American Revolution and has long been a hallmark of parish life.

In 1917, recognizing the significant role of the Catholic Church's charitable efforts to serve the poor in our State, the New York State Legislature passed a Special Act formally incorporating Catholic Charities agencies in each of the eight Dioceses in New York State, which are:

- Archdiocese of New York
- Diocese of Albany
- Diocese of Brooklyn
- Diocese of Buffalo
- Diocese of Ogdensburg
- Diocese of Rochester
- Diocese of Rockville Centre
- Diocese of Syracuse

Catholic Charities' presence in New York State is extensive and is marked by the following:

- Services provided to more than **1.5 million persons** of all faiths and all age categories
- Services in each of the state's **62 counties**
- Long-term commitment to both inner-city and rural communities
- Close collaboration and cooperation with the state's **40 Catholic hospitals and 60 nursing homes**
- More than **10,800 employees**
- More than **29,900 volunteers**
- Total services in 2004 valued at more than \$1 billion

Catholic Charities in Context

As the charitable human services arm of the Catholic Church, Catholic Charities works closely with the **1,700 parishes** (with some **7.3 million parishioners**) located in every community throughout the state. Parish communities are important resources in the delivery of emergency and community-building services. New Yorkers in need regularly come to Catholic parishes with requests for assistance when they feel they have no place else to turn, and the parishes are serving as the safety net for these individuals and families.

History of NYSCCD 1966-2006

Catholic Charities has a long history of collaboration in service delivery and the development of sound public policy with federal, state and local governments. In our collaboration on public policy we bring a long and rich tradition of promoting the dignity of the human person with a particular concern for the poorest and most vulnerable members of society as we seek policies that foster the common good. In our partnership in delivering services we bring a legacy of high quality, efficient, professional and compassionate services that touch almost every human need. In addition, by attracting private funds from our Catholic community and others, we provide additional and enhanced services beyond those paid for through government contracts.

The Catholic Charities of New York State are part of Catholic Charities USA, the national movement and association of local Catholic Charities organizations. This nationwide network is one of the largest non profit human service networks in the United States. Annually, the agencies of Catholic Charities USA serve **over 7 million individuals**, employ **48,000 staff**, utilize 214,000 volunteers and provide services of **approximately \$3 billion**.

The Catholic Charities USA network of 1,640 local agencies and institutions has consistently ranked as one of the best run and most efficient non profit organizations in the country. *Worth Magazine* cites Catholic Charities as "one of the nation's top agencies for making the biggest impact with the donations that they receive".

Services

Following is a brief outline of the types of services and the scope of services provided by Catholic Charities in New York State:

Emergency Services

In 2004, Catholic Charities in New York State provided emergency services to more than 822,000 people.

- 448,000 received food services from food banks, and pantries, soup kitchens and meal programs.
- 335,000 received other basic needs assistance including clothing assistance, emergency financial assistance, and utilities assistance
- 7,000 received disaster response services.
- 32,000 received temporary shelter or transitional housing services

Community Building Services

In 2004, Catholic Charities in New York State provided community-building services to more than 182,000 people.

- 86,000 people received community and neighborhood services including social, recreational, and neighborhood services
- 12,000 received housing services including house repair and credit assistance
- 75,000 received refugee resettlement and immigration service
- 9,000 were provided permanent, safe, affordable housing

Services that Strengthen Individuals and Families

In 2004, Catholic Charities in New York State provided services that strengthen individuals and families to more than 623,000 people.

History of NYSCCD 1966-2006

- 305,000 people received social support service including child and adult care, respite care, welfare-to-work programs, employment and transportation services
- 98,000 received counseling and mental health services
- 63,000 received education and enrichment services including family and parent education programs, drug and alcohol awareness programs, etc.
- 27,000 received health related services including services to persons with HIV/AIDS
- 56,000 received services for persons at risk of abuse or neglect
- 16,000 received pregnancy support service
- 35,000 received addiction treatment service
- 3,000 received adoption services
- 20,000 received supervised living services

Our Continuing Role in the Community

For **more than 100 years**, Catholic Charities' agencies in New York State have responded to emergency community needs. Absent the efforts of Catholic Charities in New York State many of the people most in need of services would be in an even more dire condition. Catholic Charities has been an important part of the human services delivery system in New York State for many years, and the government and people of New York State benefit from this partnership.

The first formal Catholic charitable activity in the United States was the establishment of a hospital in New Orleans in 1723 by the Ursuline Sisters. Much charitable work has been done by communities of religious women and men over the years. Diocesan charitable organizations were originally created to help Catholic parishes respond to the needs of a largely immigrant community.

Building upon this rich tradition we will continue to:

- Serve the poorest and the most vulnerable
- Respond quickly to emergency needs
- Take risks in developing services that other groups may not
- Work always in partnership with other agencies and those of other faiths • Advocate for social justice

We look forward to having your support in these efforts.

Appendix V

Presentation Given by Jack Balinsky At Public Policy Committee Meeting

September 22, 1988

“Father Doyle has just completed an extensive and excellent summary of effective Catholic Conference advocacy during this past legislative session. As is customary for him, conspicuously missing from this presentation was the word ‘I’.

“To underscore just how important Fr. Doyle’s work is to the Catholic Conference, I want to share with the Public Policy Committee an advance copy of material on the chapter on ‘Effective Lobbying’ in the book I am writing

“The first vignette from this chapter is the meeting that Fr. Doyle arranged for Maria Markovics, an excellent housing advocate from Catholic Charities in Albany and himself to request that Senator Gene Levy introduce legislation on ‘good cause for eviction’. Those of you who have been around Albany a while would recognize that this isn’t exactly that most popular issue in the Senate. You can understand Maria’s shock, then, when the meeting ended with the Senator agreeing to introduce the legislation. She later confessed her greater amazement that the conversation was all about horse-racing.

“In similar fashion, Rus Sykes, our colleague from SCAA came away from a joint meeting with the very powerful Senate Finance Chairman, absolutely astonished that the Senator had agreed to sponsor legislation increasing Medicaid income eligibility levels to the poverty level. This was a momentous event and a crucial moment in the successful three year advocacy to secure passage of this landmark legislation. When I later asked Rus why Senator Marchi had agreed to sponsor the legislation, he shook his head in wonderment and confessed, ‘I don’t know; the entire conversation happened in Italian’.

“Finally, I call to mind a meeting that I had at the end of this past session with Ken and a staff member from the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, to discuss a bill we had introduced on human services networking which had been bottled up in the Committee for two years. Again, to my surprise, when the computer spit out the bills passed by the Assembly on the last day of the session, this one was among them. This time, the conversation at the meeting had focused on the need for a priest at the Legislative Office Building to make easier access for staff members to confession and Mass.

“The moral of this story: It is clear that to be a successful lobbyist you need to be (in reverse order) a HOLY, ROMAN, HORSE TRADER. Ken Doyle fills the bill.”