

To: The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of New York State  
To: Eric Schneiderman, Attorney General of New York State  
To: Peter M. Rivera, Commissioner of the New York State Dept. of Labor  
To: Dr. John B. King, Jr., Commissioner of the New York State Dept. of Education

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Children working as professionals in the entertainment industry are uniquely vulnerable and need legal protection. Unfortunately, however, not all child performers can claim equal protection under the laws of New York State. This is why we are asking for your help -- to ensure that child models are afforded the same level of protection afforded to all other child performers working in New York.

Currently, the Department of Labor regulates and protects all child performers working in New York, with one notable exception. The regulations do not extend to child models who perform print and runway work. Fashion models--and only fashion models--are excluded from the protection afforded by the Department of Labor. Instead, models below the age of 18 who appear in print ads or walk the runways during Fashion Week, fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and are afforded only modest protections, specifically with regard to working hours, which are rarely observed or enforced. In fact, violations of the existing laws governing the use of child models are so frequent and widespread that some models have likened New York's modeling industry to the "Wild West." And even these modest and mostly unenforced provisions fall significantly short of what is afforded by the Department of Labor.

For most models who start as children in this profession, this issue is personal. At the age of 14, when many professional print and runway models start their careers, a model is unprepared to deal with inappropriate demands from adults in positions of authority, like photographers, agents and clients, who may pressure them to pose nude or semi-nude, give in to sexual demands or engage in risky behavior including, starvation dieting, working long hours without pay and forfeiting high school. For many young models working today, bowing to these pressures often feels less like a choice than a prerequisite for employment. And without regulations mandating the completion of at least some level of education and the provision of on-set tutors, many young models will forego their education entirely to pursue short-lived careers, only to wind up earning little or no money and incurring substantial start-up costs often amounting to tens of thousands of dollars of debt to their modeling agencies.

Most models begin their careers as children, but they do not receive the same legal protections as other child performers who are covered by regulations providing for chaperones, tutors and trust accounts. It's time for that to change. I hope that the legislature will finally protect child models. Will you join me by signing this petition?

Sincerely,

Sara Ziff , Founder & Director of the Model Alliance

Girl Model Team, [www.girlmodelthemovie.com](http://www.girlmodelthemovie.com)  
Chris Gay, President of Marilyn Model Management  
Carre Otis, Board Member of the Model Alliance  
Alan Gordon, National Executive Director of AGMA  
Doreen Small, Adjunct Professor at the Fashion Law Institute  
Dorian Warren, Assistant Professor of American Politics at Columbia University  
Flora Stamatiades, National Director of Organizing at Actors' Equity  
Meredith Hattam, Board Member of the Model Alliance  
Rachel Blais, Board Member of the Model Alliance  
Susan Scafidi, Director of the Fashion Law Institute  
Tracy Murphy, Board Member of the Model Alliance  
Milla Jovovich, Board Member of the Model Alliance  
Chris Brenner, Managing Agent  
Amy Lemons, Board Member of the Model Alliance

For more information on current laws, please visit [www.modelalliance.org/child-models](http://www.modelalliance.org/child-models)  
To view proposed regulations, please visit <http://labor.ny.gov/legal/laws/pdf/child-performer-regulations/part186-child-performer.pdf>