2021 – 2022 Legislative Memorandum

Subject: Relates to extending the coverage period for medical assistance to a period of one year beginning on the last day of pregnancy 
S. S1411-A (Rivera) / A. 307-A (Gottfried)

Position: SUPPORT

More women\(^1\) in the United States die of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth than in any other developed nation – and the United States is the only nation in the developed world where the maternal mortality rate is rising.\(^2\)

At the state level, New York is far from a beacon of hope: The state ranks thirtieth in the nation based on maternal death rates.\(^3\)

S.1411-A (Rivera)/A.307-A (Gottfried) will reduce maternal mortality and morbidity by expanding Medicaid coverage for one year post-pregnancy. The bill has passed the Senate, and the NYCLU urges the Assembly to pass it before closing session.

Thirty-three percent of pregnancy-related deaths occur in the weeks and months after pregnancy.\(^4\) The majority of these deaths are preventable.\(^5\) Yet, far too few people have insurance coverage to seek the care they need after pregnancy.\(^6\)

---

\(^1\) The NYCLU recognizes that all people, including transgender and nonbinary people, with the capacity to become pregnant need access to health insurance coverage and pregnancy-related care; however, many of the available statistics pertain only to cisgender women.


\(^3\) Id.


\(^5\) Id.

covers 42.6 percent of births in the United States, but pregnancy-related Medicaid coverage in New York lapses sixty days after a pregnancy ends even though the risks of maternal mortality and morbidity persist for a full year.

This is widely supported in the medical community as a policy solution to reduce maternal mortality.

Underscoring the issue’s urgency, maternal mortality is a public health crisis with stark racial disparities. Black women are nearly four times more likely than white women to die of causes related to pregnancy or childbirth. And, a greater proportion of maternal mortality-related deaths among Black women occur 43 to 365 days after pregnancy than among white women.

The NYCLU urges the Assembly to expediently pass S.1411-A (Rivera)/A.307-A (Gottfried) – we cannot wait any longer.


7 Id.
8 Id.