



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Establish the Reproductive Freedom and Equity Program

A.10148 (Gonzalez-Rojas)/S.9078(Cleare)

May 25, 2022

The Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) strongly supports A.10148 (Gonzalez-Rojas)/S.9078(Cleare) which will establish the Reproductive Freedom and Equity program to ensure that all New Yorkers and people across the country will be able to access reproductive healthcare.

As New York's primary care association for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), also known as community health centers (CHCs), CHCANYS understands the importance of access and availability of healthcare services as it relates to improving the health and well-being of patients. Our CHCs serve populations that the traditional healthcare system has historically failed, among CHC patients, 90% are low-income, 68% are Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and people of color, 13% are uninsured, and 59% are enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plus. CHCs have witnessed firsthand how the inability to access healthcare services negatively impacts the health and well-being of patients. CHCs work tirelessly to ensure that primary and preventive care is accessible to all regardless of insurance coverage, immigration status, or ability to pay.

New York State enacted the Reproductive Health Act in 2019, protecting New Yorkers' rights to reproductive healthcare. However, many states across the country do not provide those same protections and, in some cases, actively limit access to reproductive healthcare. As more and more states limit access to reproductive healthcare, people are likely to seek care in states that do provide protections for reproductive health, like New York. However, many of these people will not have the economic means to pay for those services while also covering their costs of travel, lodging, and other expenses required to obtain care.

Increasing and expanding access to reproductive healthcare is critical to advancing health equity. As a progressive leader in the country that is committed to advancing health equity, New York must build on the Reproductive Health Act to further protect New Yorkers' access to reproductive healthcare and to ensure that all those coming to New York to seek care will be welcomed with open arms.

Therefore, CHCANYS urges the New York State Legislature to swiftly pass A.10148 (Gonzalez-Rojas)/S.9078 (Cleare) to create the Reproductive Freedom and Equity program that will invest in providers to increase access to reproductive healthcare and to fund reproductive healthcare for anyone who needs financial support. This legislation would support New Yorkers and people across the country who can't afford to travel for the care they need.

For questions, please reach out to Marie Mongeon, Senior Director of Policy, at mmongeon@chcanys.org.