



Memo of Support A.6780/S.4639

The NYS AAP, representing more than 4,100 pediatricians across New York State, fully supports A.6780/S.4639 which will provide pregnant women timely access to vital prenatal care coverage.

Today, eligible New Yorkers may enroll in qualified health plans through the state's health insurance exchange, the New York State of Health Marketplace, only at designated times. Current law does, however establish a special enrollment period if people experience a qualifying event. Qualifying events that trigger a special enrollment period include life changing events like marriage, divorce, gaining citizenship, and birth, among others. This bill adds pregnancy to the list of qualifying events for a special enrollment period.

Women who become pregnant and who have income below 223% of the Federal Poverty Level can enroll in Medicaid at any time of year in New York State. This bill allows women who are not eligible for Medicaid, and who become pregnant outside of the exchange's open enrollment period, to access vital health care coverage for timely prenatal care.

The health benefits of prenatal care for pregnant women and newborns, and the potential long-term cost savings of prenatal care to the state's health care system have been established through years of evidenced based research. High risk diseases posing health risks to pregnant women and to their babies can be also be mitigated by maternity care, including preeclampsia, placental abruption, diabetes, heart conditions, and Graves' disease.

Pregnancy is a significant, life-changing event and should be added to New York State's list of qualifying events for health exchange coverage. This bill will ensure better health outcomes for both mothers and babies.

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