



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

## NY to begin pilot CMV newborn screening program

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New York will begin screening newborns for congenital cytomegalovirus through a pilot program and two state lawmakers are pushing to make the testing permanent.

The one-year program will add congenital cytomegalovirus to the state Department of Health's newborn screening panel. The testing will be free. The state Newborn Screening Program was awarded the contract through the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Cytomegalovirus, or CMV, is a common virus, according to the Mayo Clinic. But pregnant women who contract the virus could infect their babies. This can cause developmental delays, hearing loss, seizures or vision problems. It is estimated that more than 30,000 babies are born with CMV annually.

In 2022, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed legislation, "Elizabeth's Law," named for Auburn native Jim Saunders' daughter. The law requires child care providers to be informed about the risks of congenital CMV and mandates the state Department of Health to provide information

about CMV to OB-GYNs.

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Mannion, D-Geddes, and Rosenthal, D-Manhattan, are hoping to add New York to that list. The legislators have proposed legislation that would make the pilot CMV screening program permanent.

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*"We want to help people and there are people working in child care facilities that could be at risk," Mannion said. "A lot could be done with early intervention and early treatments. If they are screened, we can do something about it. The more you learn about CMV, the more it's glaringly obvious that this is long overdue and we must do it."*