



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

## Senator Webb and the Senate Majority Advance Reproductive Rights and Maternal Health Package to Support Reproductive Equity

LEA WEBB January 22, 2024

| ISSUE: **MATERNAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**



On the 51st Anniversary of Roe v. Wade Decision the Senate Democratic Majority is Advancing Landmark Legislation to Strengthen New Yorkers' Reproductive Rights and Improve Maternal Health

(**Binghamton, NY**) Senator Lea Webb (SD 52) and the Senate Democratic Majority advanced landmark legislation to strengthen reproductive rights and improve maternal health

outcomes for all New Yorkers. On the 51st anniversary of Roe v. Wade decision, the New York Senate Democratic Conference built on its long standing work to **protect abortion rights and expand access to reproductive care** in New York. Abortion care is an essential component of the reproductive health continuum and at a time when abortion bans are proliferating across the country, the U.S. maternal mortality crisis has continued to worsen with a maternal mortality rate that is three times higher than other high income nations. The U.S. maternal mortality rate is even higher for Black women, who are nearly three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than White women. (**Senator Webb's Press Conference Remarks [HERE](#)**)

This package features legislation to strengthen New Yorkers' privacy rights by requiring companies that collect and sell healthcare information to receive affirmative consent by users to sell such information to third parties; establishes a Reproductive Freedom and Equity Grant Program to ensure access to abortion care across the state and enacts the Hospital Transparency Act. This package includes a Workgroup on Maternal Health Care and Birthing Standards, stronger protections for pregnant individuals during special enrollment periods for healthcare insurance; authorizes the New York State Department of Health to create a pregnancy mobile App and directs the agency to include maternal death data disaggregated by race in pregnancy informational materials. In addition, this slate of bills includes legislation to allow doulas to enter operating rooms in hospitals and guarantee birthing individuals access to their doulas in healthcare facilities; requires healthcare providers to offer a maternal depression screening to new mothers; establishes an uterine fibroid education awareness campaign through the Department of Health and bans carcinogenic substances from menstrual products.

**Said Senator Lea Webb, Chair of the Senate Womens' Issues Committee,** "I am extremely proud of the work we are doing to increase access to quality maternal and reproductive health care in New York. We know that these issues disproportionately impact people of color and rural

communities, which often experience poor health outcomes. This package of legislation will make sure that everyone gets equitable access to comprehensive healthcare including but not limited to timely prenatal care, safe birthing experiences, comprehensive postpartum care, and reproductive health services. This is another win in New York's fight for reproductive rights and access, and an important step towards more equitable maternal health care throughout our state."

The legislation passed by the Senate Democratic Majority includes:

- **Protection of Health Information:** This bill, [S158B](#), sponsored by Senator Liz Krueger, would govern companies that collect and sell healthcare information, and provides additional rights and protections to users related to the sale of their private health information.
- **Reproductive Freedom and Equity Grant Program:** This bill, [S348C](#), sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, enacts the reproductive freedom and equity grant program to ensure access to abortion care in the state by providing funding to abortion providers and non-profit organizations whose primary function is to facilitate access to abortion care.
- **Hospital Transparency Act:** This bill, [S1003A](#), sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey, provides information to patients and the public on whether the hospital, or hospitals, in their area provides the care they seek prior to admission.
- **Maternal Health Care and Birthing Standards Workgroup:** This bill, [S7702A](#), sponsored by Senator Lea Webb, creates a Maternal Health Care and Birthing Standards Workgroup to study, evaluate, and make recommendations on the development of standards to ensure quality, culturally appropriate care for all perinatal and birthing individuals. **(SENATOR WEBB FLOOR REMARKS)**
- **Maternal Care Mobile App for Medicaid Recipients:** This bill, [S7700A](#), sponsored by Senator Lea Webb, authorizes the Department of Health to provide a prenatal and postnatal care mobile application to Medicaid recipients receiving prenatal and postpartum care. **(SENATOR WEBB**

## FLOOR REMARKS)

- **Maternal Mortality Data in Informational Materials:** This bill **S3610**, sponsored by Senator Lea Webb, requires the Department of Health to include racial statistics on maternal deaths in informational materials provided to prospective maternity patients. **(SENATOR WEBB FLOOR REMARKS)**
- **Requires Maternal Depression Screenings to New Moms:** This bill, **S2039A**, sponsored by Senator Samra Brouk, directs the Department of Health and the Office of Mental Health to develop guidance for incorporating maternal depression screenings into routine prenatal and postpartum care and to identify and publish trainings designed to support these screenings on the Department's website.
- **Special Enrollment Period Protections:** This bill, **S201**, sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, bars a health insurance plan or contract from imposing a fee or other penalty for obtaining coverage during a special enrollment period where pregnancy is the cited "qualifying life event."
- **Uterine Fibroid Awareness Campaign:** This bill, **S3219A**, sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, directs the Department of Health to establish and run a public awareness and education campaign on the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of uterine fibroids and the elevated risk for Black and Brown women to suffer from this condition.
- **Ban on Carcinogenic Substances from Menstrual Products:** This bill, **S3529A**, sponsored by Senator Nathalia Fernández, prohibits the sale of any menstrual products which contain certain restricted and harmful substances that may have a carcinogenic effect on the human body.
- **Permit Doulas in the Operating Room of Maternal Care Facilities:** This bill, **S5991A**, sponsored by Senator Roxanne Persaud, grants a doula guaranteed access to the operating room during a C-section delivery in circumstances where no other support person is available.
- **Guarantees Access to a Designated Doula:** This bill, **S5992A**, sponsored by Senator Roxanne Persaud, guarantees expecting and new mothers' access to their designated doula.

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