



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

## Senator Cooney, Assemblymember Wallace Reveal Plan to Solidify New York as Safe Haven for Reproductive Healthcare Workers

JEREMY COONEY May 14, 2024

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Legislators' Bill Would Allow Workers Licensed in Other States to Practice In New York

(ALBANY, NY) - Today, **Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester)** and **Assemblymember Monica Wallace (D-Lancaster)** called for the passage of their bills ([S4148A/A9199](#)) to enable reproductive healthcare workers licensed and in good standing in other states to practice in New York while awaiting certification. The legislators were joined by Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts.

Following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, 21 states have enacted rules to outright ban or limit access to abortions. Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Wallace underscored the need for New York to provide a haven for reproductive health rights in the wake of these restrictions across the country. The legislators explained that their bill would allow reproductive healthcare workers licensed to operate in other states to practice in New York, supplying New York with additional workers, and providing a clear pathway to employment for displaced workers from other states.

"As much of our nation moves backwards when it comes to protecting reproductive healthcare, it's time for New York to take the lead," said **Senator Cooney**. "Everyone deserves the autonomy to make decisions concerning their body, and everyone deserves access to qualified healthcare workers to guide them through this process. I'm proud to stand alongside Assemblymember Wallace to make clear our unwavering commitment to protecting our healthcare heroes and defending the right to choose in New York State."

**Assemblymember Monica Wallace** said, "Reproductive freedoms have been under assault for the past two years, as nearly half of the states in the nation have severely restricted or outright banned the right to choose. Not only are these bans endangering women's health, they are also having a chilling effect on the medical field, as many healthcare professionals are reluctant to practice in states where common healthcare procedures are criminalized. As more women come to states like New York to exercise their reproductive rights, we need to welcome these healthcare workers and ensure they are able to practice here. I'm proud to join Senator Cooney in sponsoring legislation to grant temporary authorization to healthcare workers to provide reproductive health services in New York pending their licensing or certification application."

**Robin Chappelle Golston, President & CEO, Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts** said,

"Reproductive health care providers, like all health care providers, face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining the licensed health care professionals to deliver this much needed care. Challenges with staffing, even in states like New York that have taken steps to protect the right to care, can thwart access. As hostile states continue to impose extreme abortion restrictions, more people will be forced to cross state lines to receive care – not only impacting those traveling to New York – but also New Yorkers seeking to access care in their own state. We must employ creative solutions to ensure we can meet the needs of all who seek care in New York, and we applaud Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Wallace for sponsoring legislation that would allow reproductive and sexual health care providers licensed in other states to begin practicing in New York without delay."

"In a time when the light of reproductive healthcare access is under threat elsewhere, New York must open the gates of our great state to those guardians of healthcare. The passage of bills S4148A & A9199 is not merely legislative progress—it is a commitment to safeguarding our core values of care and compassion," said **Senator Robert Jackson**. "By welcoming skilled healthcare providers from other states, we enrich our state's capacity to serve as a sanctuary of medical excellence and human rights. Let us advance with determination, not only to preserve healthcare rights but to extend their protective embrace to every person who turns to us for refuge, respect and care."

"As a co-sponsor and a member of the Senate's Health committee, I believe this bill will aid in the number of New Yorkers who are needing or seeking reproductive health care needs across the state," said **Senator Lea Webb**. "I am a strong advocate for reproductive rights. Allowing out of state licensed healthcare workers in this field to practice in New York is crucial for emergency situations, meeting patient demand, and ensuring access to care for individuals regardless of where they live."

Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Wallace explained that their bill would apply to physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and midwives. These workers would be authorized to work in New York while waiting for a decision on their certification application from the state Education Department, incentivizing workers leaving other states to choose New York and increasing the state's pool of qualified reproductive healthcare workers. Only workers from states deemed to have rigorous qualifications would be eligible. Those from eligible states would be allowed to practice as soon as they apply for state certification and show they have an employment opportunity in place.

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