



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Senator Kennedy Announces Certificate of Still Birth Approved in Senate, Assembly

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY June 17, 2011

| ISSUE: **FAMILIES, HEALTH**



After nearly a decade of logjam, bill finally approved by both houses

ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, D-58th District, announced the State Senate and Assembly have passed legislation ([S.3111B](#)) to create the Certificate of Still Birth to help heal the pain felt by families enduring the stillbirth of a child.

Currently, the state only issues a fetal death certificate when a child is stillborn – leaving many families feeling that the state does not recognize their stillborn child ever existing. A Certificate of Still Birth will serve as state recognition of the child's birth and life.

After nearly a decade of logjam, the bill has finally made its way through both chambers of the Legislature. The original bill was first introduced in 2003. Since then, it is estimated that 16,000 children have been stillborn – leaving 16,000 mothers without the option of state recognition of their child's birth.

“So many families have experienced the tragic loss of a stillbirth. It's an emotional roller coaster – the excitement and anticipation of expecting a child followed by the deep pain and sadness of losing your son or daughter. Add the physical pain of giving birth, and mothers especially are left feeling an indescribable amount of distress and hurt,” Senator Kennedy said. “Families search out closure, but for years the state has refused to help provide that closure in the form of a Certificate of Still Birth.

“The state only issues a certificate of fetal death – not even recognizing the birth of the stillborn child. The Certificate of Still Birth is a long overdue change that mothers and families deserve for their lost child,” he added. “The certificate is recognition of the birth and life of a stillborn child, and it can provide a sense of closure. It is the least we can do to help heal the pain that families endure after a stillbirth.

“It took a lot of work to finally get the bill approved by both houses of the Legislature, and I thank Still Parents NY for driving this issue forward with their persistent organization of supporters urging action. Thank you also to Assemblymembers Gabryszak and Schroeder, along with Senator Larkin, for the diligent efforts to advance this issue.”

The legislation has been sent to the Governor's desk and is awaiting his signature to become law.

Once the bill becomes law, a mother, upon the stillbirth of a child, will have the option of receiving a Certificate of Still Birth or simply a certificate of fetal death.

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[Click here to view video of Senator Kennedy's floor speech on the Certificate of Still Birth bill.](#)

[Click here to view video of Senator Larkin's remarks on the bill.](#)