



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Senator Serrano Passes Bill Requiring Cultural Competency Training for Medical Professionals

JOSE M. SERRANO February 13, 2020

| ISSUE: **HEALTH CARE, CULTURAL COMPETENCY**



(Albany, NY)- The New York State Senate passed legislation sponsored by Senator José M. Serrano (D-Manhattan/Bronx) today that seeks to reduce healthcare disparities and improve medical outcomes by requiring cultural awareness and competency training for medical professionals. The legislation will play a crucial role in ending statewide health disparities among minority populations.

A 2019 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that African American, American Indian, and Alaska Native women are two to three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women— and these elevated rates persist regardless of income and education levels. Furthermore, the study found that approximately 60 percent of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable.

The bill (S2406A) requires medical professionals, including physicians, nurses, dentists and nurse practitioners, to complete basic coursework on cultural awareness and competency as part of continuing medical education. Coursework will include training on providing medical services for minorities, including ethnic, linguistic, religious, sexual orientation and gender identity healthcare issues.

“There is ample evidence that minority groups face glaring disparities in access to quality healthcare,” said Senator Serrano. “Today’s actions seek to close the gap by ensuring that medical professionals receive training on culturally sensitive care, which will also help them to recognize and minimize unintended biases. New York is one of the most diverse states in the nation, and we should be leading the way in providing everyone— regardless of race, sexual orientation, English proficiency, or disability— with quality healthcare they can trust.”

Cultural competency improves communication between health professionals and patients to remove unconscious biases and improve understanding of the differing social determinants of health, such as access to nutritious food, housing accommodation, education and income levels that are particular to each patient group.

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## 2019-S2406A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Requires cultural awareness and competence training for medical professionals

January 24, 2019

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Jose M. Serrano**

Do you support this bill?

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