



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Samra G. Brouk

Senator Brouk Passes Resolution Proclaiming January 23 as Maternal Health Awareness Day

SAMRA G. BROUK January 27, 2023

| ISSUE: **MATERNAL HEALTH, MATERNAL MORTALITY, SENATOR BROUK, NEW YORK STATE SENATE RESOLUTION**

ALBANY, NY - Today, Senator Brouk passed a resolution on the Senate floor commemorating January 23 as Maternal Health Awareness Day (J296). In a rousing and heartfelt speech, Senator Brouk gave voice to the anguish of New York families affected by maternal mortality and vowed to turn that grief into action (*see linked video*). The resolution was passed on the same day the Senate took up the Equal Rights Amendment and other measures to secure access to reproductive health care.

Senator Brouk, who welcomed her first child in 2022, is keenly aware of the barriers facing birthing people across New York State, especially for Black and brown parents. She passed legislation improving maternal mental health screenings, as these conditions are a leading cause of maternal deaths in the state and Finger Lakes Region. Senator Brouk also sponsors legislation expanding access to doula care—doulas provide physical, informational and emotional support to families during pregnancy and postpartum, and have been shown to improve family health outcomes—and is working to ensure parents are equipped with the information they need about procedures like cesarean sections and episiotomies, which increase a pregnant person's morbidity risk.

Senator Samra Brouk said, “A person’s health, wellness, and ability to achieve success often starts pre-birth with the health and wellbeing of the birthing parent. However, countless women in New York State live in communities without adequate maternal care, leaving growing families without the support they need. By raising awareness of New York’s maternal mortality crisis, we can start to make real changes to keep our communities healthy.”

Maternal mental health conditions are the most common complication in pregnancy and childbirth, affecting one in five women. The risks are significantly higher for new mothers of color; notably, while Black women are twice as likely to experience many of these conditions, they are half as likely to seek help. In Monroe County, the maternal mortality rate is approximately 46% higher than the national average and 54% higher than in the rest of the state.