

New York State Health Act
New York Health Act A5248/S3525
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Testimony

Greetings Chairman Gottfried, Chairman Rivera and members of the State and Senate Committees. It is my pleasure to provide you with my testimony regarding the New York Health Act.

My name is Sascha James-Conterelli. I have been a midwife in New York State for over 18 years. I proudly represent over 1,200 midwives as the president of the New York State Association of Licensed Midwives. The New York State Association of Licensed Midwives support the New York Health Act.

As one of the co-chairs of the Governor's Task Force on Maternal Mortality and Racial Disparities, we learned from our listening sessions across the state that women and birthing families in New York are in desperate need of health care resources. The lack of resources has resulted in little to no health care options contributing to our rising rate of maternal mortality. Maternal mortality and morbidity is a direct reflection of the health of a community.

A Kaiser's Health Report issued January 2019 (<https://www.kff.org/report-section/the-uninsured-and-the-aca-a-primer-key-facts-about-health-insurance-and-the-uninsured-amidst-changes-to-the-affordable-care-act-how-does-lack-of-insurance-affect-access-to-care/>) substantiates this and found that 20% of uninsured adults say they went without needed care in the past year because of cost compared to 3% of adults with private coverage.

How does lack of insurance affect access to care?

Health insurance makes a difference in whether and when people get necessary medical care, where they get their care, and ultimately, how healthy they are. Uninsured people are far more likely than those with insurance to postpone health care or forgo it altogether. Going without care for a pregnant woman has dire consequences not only for the pregnant mother but for the growth and development of the child.

Our community. New York State, is unhealthy. We have an opportunity to begin to address this through the New York Health Act.