

2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

Despite the progress made under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), 1.1 million New Yorkers remain without health insurance coverage & health care is still unaffordable for many with coverage. The COVID crisis makes the lack of access an even more critical problem. And many consumers are saddled with medical debt, threatening their financial futures.

New York must continue to address gaps & provide sufficient funding to ensure that everyone, particularly "hard to reach" communities, know about the availability of health insurance & how to use their coverage. We support both a total overhaul of our state health insurance system through a single-payer program known as New York Health & the coverage expansions listed below. We also support measures to make prescription drugs more affordable; to alleviate the disproportionate harm of hospital closures on communities of color; & to give community members a say in hospital care delivered in their communities.



WE SUPPORT

Making All New Yorkers Eligible for Health Coverage & Making Coverage More Affordable

- Allocation of \$13 million to cover people who have had COVID-19 & are excluded from coverage due to their immigration status
- Essential Plan for immigrants who lack access to coverage due to their status
- Making coverage more affordable for those enrolled through the NY State of Health Marketplace
- Adequate funding for several programs to assist consumers with enrollment & using their coverage

Adequate Medicaid Funding

We oppose any cuts to Medicaid or any changes that reduce eligibility or benefits or increase financial barriers.

Medical Billing Protections

The Patient Medical Debt Protection Act [A3470/S2521] would address the most egregious industry practices, including multiple bills from a single hospital stay, added facility fees, & large "surprise" bills due to health plan or provider misinformation.

Making Sure Communities Have a Say When Hospitals & Services Are Reduced

Statewide, 41 hospitals have closed since 2003 - disproportionately in low-income neighborhoods populated by people of color & immigrants. We support legislation that would require:

- Hospitals to undertake a health equity assessment when proposing a merger or closure;
- The Commissioner of Health to issue an impact report within 30 days after a hospital has submitted an application for closure & hold a forum with the community; &
- That all hospitals (not just public hospitals as at present) have community advisory boards & community service plans

WHY WE SUPPORT

Expanded Health Coverage, Affordability, & Outreach

OVER 1.1 MILLION New Yorkers are uninsured

OVER 400,000

New Yorkers are uninsured because of their immigration status



OVER 300,000 New Yorkers have enrolled since 2013 with the help of Navigators

BLACK & LATINX
New Yorkers have
much lower rates
of coverage than
white New Yorkers.

Medical Billing Protections

OVER 40,000 New Yorkers have been sued by hospitals in the past 5 years

Medical debt affects **23%** of white Americans & **31%** of Black Americans

Making Sure Communities Have a Say

Since 2003

41 HOSPITALS

have closed statewide
including 18 in New York City

Hospital closures have occurred **without concern for impact** on low & middle income communities & communities of color.
This disparity has life & death consequences.

Tax the Rich & Invest in Our Health Care

We have the ability & the resources for New York to have the best universal healthcare system in the world - but we can't get there unless we tax the ultra-wealthy in our state.

The Invest in Our New York Act is a package of six state bills that raises \$50 billion to ensure that we rebuild our economy by taxing the wealthiest New Yorkers. The full bill package & more information can be found at www.investinourny.org.

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