

1 **2023 NYSAC Fall Seminar**  
2 **Standing Committee on Public Health and Mental Health**  
3 **Resolution #3**

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5 **Resolution Urging New York State to Increase Doula Reimbursement Rates**

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7 **WHEREAS**, across New York State, pervasive disparities in access to respectful, high-  
8 quality, patient-centered, and trauma-informed maternity services drive high rates of  
9 severe maternal morbidity (SMM) and mortality (MM); and

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11 **WHEREAS**, New York State ranks in the highest quartile for SMM nationally; and

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13 **WHEREAS**, the New York City SMM rate is more than two times the national average  
14 and 3.6 times higher than other regions of the state; and

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16 **WHEREAS**, Black individuals in NYC experience a MM rate 8 times that of white  
17 individuals, and SMM rates are also higher for Black (2.3x) and Hispanic (1.7x)  
18 individuals; and

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20 **WHEREAS**, one promising strategy for improving birth outcomes and reducing costs  
21 (in reduced rates of Caesarean birth and other pregnancy complications) is doula  
22 support; and

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24 **WHEREAS**, because doula services are not currently covered statewide through  
25 Medicaid, they remain out of reach for underserved communities that are at higher risk  
26 of poor outcomes and would benefit the most; and

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28 **WHEREAS**, access to doula care is critical for Medicaid enrollees, who often have a  
29 greater need for additional support, coordination of care, and connection to resources;  
30 and

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32 **WHEREAS**, an equitable Medicaid reimbursement rate for doula care will help New  
33 York save lives, reduce healthcare costs, and ensure that doula work offers a sustainable  
34 livelihood.

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36 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the New York State Association of  
37 Counties (NYSAC) supports an increase of \$1,930 to doula reimbursement rates, based  
38 on the rate initially proposed by the New York Coalition for Doula Access (NYCDA), a  
39 statewide collaboration of doulas and allies that is co-led by the New York City  
40 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; and

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42 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, it is estimated that New York’s Medicaid program  
43 would see \$6.9 million in savings annually if just 6 percent of all pregnant Medicaid  
44 recipients were supported by doulas; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that doula care not only advances maternal  
2 healthcare quality but also provides significant cost savings; and  
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4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to  
5 Governor Kathy Hochul, Acting Health Commissioner James McDonald, the New York  
6 State Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.