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HCFANY APPLAUDS GOVERNOR HOCHUL FOR INVESTING IN HEALTH CARE, BUT VULNERABLE NEW YORKERS NEED MORE

Health Care For All New York (HCFANY) is a statewide coalition of over 170 organizations dedicated to achieving quality, affordable health coverage for all New Yorkers. HCFANY lauds the investments in health care and the coverage expansions Governor Hochul proposes in her Executive Budget, including:

- The expansion of income eligibility for Medicaid for people with disabilities and older residents;
- The increase in income eligibility for the Essential Plan to moderate income New Yorkers; and the
- The elimination of the \$9 premium for low-waged families and other improvements for the Children's Health Insurance Program.

But we remain concerned that our most vulnerable residents may be left out of her proposals. We urge the Legislature to ensure that all New Yorkers have health insurance by enacting the following:

- The New York Health Act: S5474/A6058 would eliminate eligibility exclusions based on income and immigration status and create systemic changes that would make health care affordable for everyone.
- Coverage for All: S1572/A880 would open the Essential Plan's eligibility to all New Yorkers who meet income requirements (below 200 percent of the federal poverty level), regardless of immigration status. Those unable to enroll in the federally funded program would be covered using state only funds.
- Medicaid for 1 Year Post-Pregnancy: S1411A/A307A would extend postpartum Medicaid coverage to one year, past the current 60 days, and would include everyone regardless of immigration status.

“Reimagining the future while correcting the mistakes of the past, as Governor Hochul puts it, means making sure that everyone in New York has health insurance that allows access to affordable quality care,” said Mark Hannay, Executive Director of Metro New York Health Care For All. “As the formal budget process now commences, the Legislature must work with the Governor to make sure that all low-income immigrant New Yorkers have affordable insurance coverage as part of this year’s adopted budget. And once that budget is done, the Legislature must advance toward universal health care before this year’s legislative session ends in early June.”

“We agree with Governor Hochul’s recent statement that there is nothing more frightening than seeking health care without insurance coverage and that everyone deserves the dignity of affordable, quality health care,” said Amanda Lugg, Director of Advocacy and LGBTQ



Programming at African Services Committee. “The Legislature must pass A880/S1572 now so that no New Yorker experiences that fear because of their immigration status.”

“New York is in the midst of a maternal and child health crisis that disproportionately hurts people of color,” said Lois Uttley, Women’s Health Program Director for Community Catalyst. “Expanding postpartum coverage for a full year is the right thing to do – but it should happen for everyone, regardless of immigration status. S1411A/A307A, sponsored by Senator Rivera and Assemblymember Gottfried, would achieve this.”

HCFANY also urges the Governor and the Legislature to protect patients from medical debt and extraordinary collection actions. “The Governor is proposing to shore up the medical industry’s bottom lines, but what about the fiscal stability of patients,?” asked Elisabeth Benjamin, Vice President of Health Initiatives at the Community Service Society of New York. “New York’s nonprofit hospitals have sued over 52,000 patients in the past five years, over 5,000 during the pandemic. The New York State budget should require hospitals to desist from extreme medical debt practices in exchange for their \$10 billion rescue package.”