

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™
NYS AAP, District II, A coalition of Chapters 1, 2 & 3



April 25, 2022

Memo of Support A. 9294/S. 8438

Provides Continuous Medicaid Coverage for Children 0-3

The New York State American Academy of Pediatrics, representing more than 5,000 pediatricians across New York State, enthusiastically supports A. 9294/S. 8438. This legislation will provide continuous and consistent coverage for our youngest New Yorkers.

The First 1,000 Days are critical to healthy brain development, physical development and social development of infants and toddlers. Having stable health coverage during this period will help ensure that all babies have comprehensive and dependable pediatric care. It will support parents as they establish trusted relationships with their child's pediatrician/physician. It will help ensure that all babies have access to timely immunizations and can schedule and attend vital well baby visits. Keeping these very young children and their parents connected to the health care system will pay dividends by securing the best possible health care outcomes for the children and for their future development. The current annual re-enrollment requirement results in churning and loss of coverage. Churning creates unstable care and interrupts positive parent, child pediatrician relationships.

The cost of this improvement will be minimal. It has the potential to save dollars currently wasted in the multiple re-enrollment requirements at both the state and the insurer levels. In addition, NYS already covers the first year of a child on Medicaid, this critical expansion would simply add years two and three. In general infant and toddler health care is low cost and highly efficient and effective care. This expansion can improve the health care of tens of thousands of babies across New York and improve health over the life span.

Additionally, our youngest New York families are the highest percentage of families and children living in poverty. Providing the two extra years of continuous coverage will simply eliminate the need to reenroll with the same information year after year, without any significant change in family income. As New York inches closer and closer to providing universally available health care for all of its residents, opening the door to consistent coverage for our youngest and poorest New Yorkers is a critical, important and affordable initiative.

We urge our legislators to pass this bill now, so that our youngest New Yorkers can garner the benefits of consistent and continuous medical care as soon as possible. The time is now. Let's do it for the littlest New Yorkers.

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