



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shirley L. Huntley

Midwives Act

SHIRLEY L. HUNTLEY July 6, 2010

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News From Senator Shirley L. Huntley

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Senator Huntley: Senate ‘Midwives’ Bill Gives Women More Health Care Choices

Women will have more choices and better access to affordable, quality health care during their pregnancy thanks to a bill co-sponsored by Senator Shirley L. Huntley (D-Jamaica) which eliminates the requirement that midwives have a "written practice agreement" with a physician. The Midwifery Modernization Act (S. 5007A), which unanimously passed the Chamber, allows midwives to practice independently to fulfill the medical responsibilities for which they are expertly trained and licensed.

“For many women in New York, because of economics or geography, midwives can be their only source of health care. Licensed midwives play a vital role in our health care system, and we recognize them as essential partners in ensuring quality, affordable health care is accessible to women in New York,” said Senator Huntley.

New York's 1,300 licensed midwives perform about 10-percent of all deliveries in the state. Midwives also provide pre-natal, post-partum and other health care services for women of all ages.

New York is experiencing a shortage in its health care workforce, and midwives say it is becoming difficult in rural communities to find doctors to sign agreements. New York will join more than a dozen states that allow midwives to practice independently.

This legislation has also passed the Assembly and is now awaiting action by the Governor. For more information visit: <http://open.nysenate.gov/legislation/api/1.0/html/bill/A8117B>