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Contact: Soojin Choi |347-556-6335| press@johnliusenate.com

STATE SENATE PASSES BILL TO COMBAT UNDIAGNOSED DIABETES IN AAPI COMMUNITIES

Albany, NY – On Tuesday, the New York State Senate passed legislation to address the alarming rise in Asian Americans living with undiagnosed diabetes, as part of a new Affordable Health Care package.

[S634B/A1206](#), by state Senator John Liu and Assembly Member Ron Kim aims to expand insurance coverage for diabetes and prediabetes screenings, in accordance with nationally recognized, evidence-based medical guidelines. This is an important step in addressing the alarmingly high rate of undiagnosed diabetes in Asian American communities.

Medical studies have shown that Asian Americans are more likely to develop diabetes at lower BMIs than other populations, yet current standards don't recommend screenings until a BMI of 25. This legislation requires insurance plans to cover screenings starting at a BMI of 23 and would eliminate deductibles, copayments, and other out-of-pocket costs that often prevent early detection and timely treatment.

The bill aligns with campaigns like the "[Screen at 23](#)" campaign as well as nationally recognized recommendations from the American Diabetes Association and Centers for Disease Control, which note that current screening guidelines leave many in the AAPI community undiagnosed and vulnerable.

State Senator John Liu stated, "Including this legislation as part of the Senate's Affordable Healthcare Package is a critical step in addressing the high rates of undiagnosed diabetes in Asian American communities. By expanding access to screenings at lower BMI levels, we can ensure earlier detection and better health outcomes for those who otherwise may go undiagnosed. Affordable healthcare starts with prevention, and this legislation directly addresses a shortcoming in state law and insurance standards that for too long has kept our community from receiving necessary diagnosis and care."

State Assembly Member Ron Kim stated, "This legislation marks an important step forward in our continued efforts to address diabetes in our communities. While diabetes is often overlooked as an issue impacting Asian Americans, research consistently shows that it can have serious health consequences for our community at even lower BMI levels than others. I am grateful to continue partnering with our community and legislative partners on this critical bill, and we remain committed to working diligently to see it passed in the Assembly this year."

Monica Billger, Director of State Government Affairs for the American Diabetes Association, stated, "Early diagnosis and intervention can help prevent or delay diabetes and improve outcomes. Expanding access to screening is critical in helping address the epidemic of diabetes and its devastating complications."

Charles Lopresto, Internal Medicine Physician in Queens and Chair of the Legislative Committee for the Medical Society of the County Of Queens, stated, “As Chair of the Legislative Committee for the Medical Society of the County of Queens, I am proud to support this legislation to ensure insurance coverage for diabetes screening at a BMI of 23. This policy reflects well-established clinical evidence that Asian American and Pacific Islander individuals face increased diabetes risk at lower BMI thresholds. Too often, diabetes goes undiagnosed until serious complications develop — outcomes that can be prevented with timely screening. By closing this coverage gap, New York is taking an important step toward more equitable, evidence-based preventive care that will improve health outcomes for communities in Queens and across the state.”

Kaushal Challa, CEO, Charles B. Wang Community Health Center, stated, “We support S634B/A1206 and advancing it as part of the Senate’s Affordable Health Care package. At the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center, we see every day how critical early screening is in preventing diabetes—especially in Asian American communities, where risk begins at lower body weight. By lowering the BMI threshold for diabetes screenings from 25 to 23, this bill will ensure more New Yorkers receive timely, preventive care. We proudly support this measure as a vital step toward prevention and improved health outcomes for all.”

George Liu, MD, PhD, President and CEO of Coalition of Asian American IPA (CAIPA), stated, “Asian Americans develop diabetes at lower BMI levels, yet our screening standards have not kept pace with the science. A BMI threshold of 23 allows us to identify risk earlier and intervene before irreversible damage occurs. This is a necessary, evidence-based step toward equitable preventive care.”

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