



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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Senate Majority Advances Amendment to Codify Abortion, Contraception, and Stronger Equal Rights in State Constitution

(Albany, NY) Today, the New York State Senate Majority advanced the first passage of an amendment to codify the right to an abortion and the right to contraception in the State Constitution. This amendment would also update the existing Equal Rights Amendment to extend current protections to several new classes, including on the basis of sex, disability, national origin, ethnicity, and age.

Upon winning the supermajority in 2019, the Senate Democratic Conference immediately took steps to strengthen our civil rights and codify crucial protections, starting with the [Reproductive Health Act](#). Further, after the leaked Dobbs decision surfaced, the Democratic Conference strengthened existing provisions and expanded access to care in a nation-leading [reproductive health package](#).

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, “The reversal of *Roe v. Wade* made it clear that New York State must continue to stand up and be a national leader to protect women and individual rights. That is why we are proactively codifying broader equal rights under the law and ensuring the constitutional right to abortion and contraception in New York. This is a massive step forward for our state while others move backwards, and an important stance against the Supreme Court’s attacks on our rights. I am incredibly proud of our conference for advancing these historic changes to our constitution and thank Speaker Heastie and Governor Hochul for their partnership in getting this done.”

The amendment advanced by the Senate Majority, includes:

- **Expanding Protected Classes Under the Equal Rights Amendment:** This resolution, [S51002](#), sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, expands equal protection under the law to several new identity classes, including on the basis of:
 - Ethnicity, national origin, age, disability and sex. Sex includes sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, reproductive healthcare and autonomy.
 - With these enumerations, this amendment guarantees a constitutional right to reproductive healthcare for any individual in the state of New York. It also

protects marriage equality and other rights that the Supreme Court has endangered.

- Additionally, this amendment preserves laws designed to prevent or dismantle discrimination on the basis of these characteristics such as affirmative action.

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