

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming Introduces Legislation to Modernize EPIC Application System & Improve Access for Seniors

Senator Pam Helming today announced that she has introduced legislation to modernize the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) Program's application system. The EPIC Program is a New York State program that provides seniors with co-payment assistance and Medicare Part D covered prescription drug costs. Specifically, this legislation (S.6646) authorizes and directs the Commissioner of Health to establish an electronic online system for registration into the EPIC Program.

Currently, to apply for the EPIC Program, a beneficiary or their agent must submit a completed application via fax or postal mail. This creates a challenge for individuals who do not have access to a fax machine or who would prefer to file online and be able to confirm receipt of their application. This legislation allows participants to continue to apply through these means, but also provides the option for an online application. Senator Helming collaborated with Brian Doyle, President & CEO of CareValue, Inc., (CareValue) of Canandaigua, NY to author this legislation. Doyle is a leading authority on senior citizen insurance access and management. CareValue has been a strong supporter of innovation and has been making great strides in modernizing this industry.

"In a continuously growing technological world, the EPIC Program's application process remains antiquated. Delivering applications via postal mail and fax can be a time consuming and unwieldy process. By giving our seniors the option to apply online, they can receive instant notification and peace of mind that their applications have been delivered and will be processed in a timely manner. We must continue to help our senior citizens, giving them more access to vital programs and resources such as the EPIC Program. This issue was also raised during both my recent visit to the Wayne County Senior Citizen Action Council annual picnic and CareValue in Canandaigua. Thank you to Brian Doyle of CareValue for his continued partnership in serving our seniors and making government more efficient," Senator Helming said.

"The NY State EPIC program assists Medicare beneficiaries by providing the lowest possible co-pay for prescription drugs. CareValue is excited to work with Senator Pam Helming to create a more efficient registration process to help seniors gain increased access to this important State Pharmaceutical Assistance Program (SPAP). By evolving the paper application process into an online application, we'll be able to better serve beneficiaries." said Brian Doyle.

According to the Department of Health, the EPIC Program helps more than 327,000 seniors. To join, a senior must be a New York State resident with an age of 65 years or older; enrolled or eligible to be enrolled in a Medicare Part D drug plan; have an annual income below \$75,000 if single or \$100,000 if married; and not be receiving full Medicaid benefits.

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