



## MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

### Coverage for All New Yorkers

A.3020A (Gonzalez-Rojas)/S.2237A (Rivera)

May 26, 2023

The Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) supports A.3020A (Gonzalez-Rojas)/S.2237A (Rivera) which would expand healthcare coverage to individuals who are currently excluded due to their immigration status.

CHCANYS is the primary care association for New York's federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), also known as community health centers (CHCs), which serve more than 2.3 million patients each year at 800 sites across the State. Operating in medically underserved areas, CHCs provide comprehensive primary, preventive care, and wraparound services to everyone, regardless of insurance status, immigration status, or ability to pay. In some communities, were it not for the local CHC, there would be no other source of primary care. CHCs serve populations that have historically been failed by the traditional health care system: 89% are low income, 68% are Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and other people of color, 13% are uninsured, and 59% are enrolled in Medicaid or Child Health Plus.

Located in low-income and medically underserved communities, CHCs provide crucial primary and preventative care to anyone who requires services, regardless of insurance status, immigration status, or ability to pay. In fact, 13% of CHC patients are uninsured. Because CHCs have robust outreach, enrollment, and navigation services, we suspect that most of those individuals are ineligible for health insurance due to their immigration status. Although CHCs treat everyone regardless of whether they are insured, uninsured individuals experience the most barriers in accessing care outside of CHCs.

There are currently 154,000 low-income New Yorkers statewide who are excluded from accessing health insurance due to their immigration status. It is unconscionable that, even though immigrants make up 54% of essential workers in New York and 70% of New York's undocumented labor force work in essential businesses, they are unable to access affordable healthcare.

Moreover, people who are uninsured are more likely to receive an initial diagnosis in the advanced stages of a disease or live with unmanaged chronic conditions. According to Families USA, more than 8,200 New Yorkers died from COVID-19 because they lacked health insurance coverage.<sup>1</sup> The connection is clear – by failing to provide meaningful ongoing access to affordable health services through coverage, the state is exacerbating existing health disparities.

**CHCANYS urges the New York State Legislature to pass A.3020A/S.2237A to provide coverage expansion for undocumented immigrants so that every New Yorker can have access to the care they need to live a healthy life.**

For more information, contact Marie Mongeon, Vice President of Policy at [mmongeon@chcanys.org](mailto:mmongeon@chcanys.org).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://familiesusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/COV-2021-64\\_Loss-of-Lives-Report\\_Report\\_v2\\_4-20-21.pdf](https://familiesusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/COV-2021-64_Loss-of-Lives-Report_Report_v2_4-20-21.pdf)