

Postpartum Resource Center of New York, Inc.
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www.postpartumny.org

**Memo of Support
S.7234/A.9610**

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The Postpartum Resource Center of New York, Inc. strongly supports S.7234/A.9610 for the 50,000 New York families who will experience the debilitating illness of Maternal Depression each year.

The proposed legislation defines Maternal Depression, provides information and guidelines on maternal depression screening; provides information on follow-up support and referrals; and provides public education to promote awareness of and de-stigmatize maternal depression.

The Postpartum Resource Center of New York is the non profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to increase awareness and access to care for New York State families at risk or experiencing a perinatal mood and anxiety disorder.

For the past sixteen years, we have been empowering parents and communities to improve the lives of families by addressing Maternal Depression, including parental mental health and parenting with psychiatric disabilities. We provide a state-wide, toll-free bilingual Helpline; *Moms on Call* and Family Telephone Support; www.postpartumny.org with a state-wide Perinatal Mood Disorders Resource Directory, *Perinatal Mood Disorders Prevention Program: Parental Mental Health - The Way It Should Be Before and After Having a Baby*; and the Postpartum Resource Center of New York's Training Institute where we provide training on screening, education and replication of our *Circle of Caring* Pregnancy and Postpartum Depression/Anxiety Support Group program. We seek to save lives, build healthy families and vibrant communities.

According to the New York State Department of Health, postpartum depression is the most common medical disorder after childbirth. Denial, ignorance and stigma are major roadblocks to wellness. When Maternal Depression is left unrecognized, untreated or undertreated, preventable devastating consequences may occur. Research has shown that Maternal Depression is dangerous with suicide being the leading killer of women in the first year after they give birth. Maternal Depression during pregnancy and after having a baby negatively affects birth outcomes, infant mental health, bonding and attachment, breastfeeding and child development. There is also an increased risk of infanticide, filicide, child abuse and neglect, substance abuse and partners at higher risk of becoming depressed.

S.7234/A.9610 addresses these concerns including with prevention and early detection practices that will increase families having a healthy start and will provide for long-term healthcare savings. This legislation also recognizes the important role that pediatricians take to address this illness. S.7234/A.9610 is essential to the current and future health and safety of our New York families and communities.

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