STATE OF NEW YORK

7779--B

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

December 1, 2023

Introduced by Sens. BROUK, FERNANDEZ, JACKSON, WEBB -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- recommitted to the Committee on Women's Issues in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to the creation of a community doula expansion grant program; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to the community doula expansion grant program fund

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby declares that poor maternal and infant health outcomes, especially when it comes to racial disparities, are a public health crisis that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and quality of life of child bearing people, infants and their families. The legislature hereby acknowledges that community-based doula care is one solution in addressing this public health crisis. The legislature also acknowledges imbalances in how doula care is accessed in different communities. The legislature also acknowledges how doulas in the BIPOC community are integrated, or lack integration into the maternal health continuum. The legislature acknowledges that those seeking to become community-based doulas face a multitude of barriers, including institutional barriers, within the healthcare continuum. The legislature hereby finds the importance in establishing a dedicated fund to support community-based doulas and community-based doula organizations. This fund would be assisting those trying to navigate the Federal and State Medicaid frameworks for doula care to become community-based doulas. Which would be one step in solving the existing

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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barriers to those seeking equitable prenatal, intranatal, and postpartum care services.

§ 2. Article 25 of the public health law is amended by adding a new title 3-A to read as follows:

TITLE III-A

COMMUNITY DOULA EXPANSION PROGRAM

Section 2560. Community doula expansion grant program.

2561. Definitions.

2562. Rules and regulations.

2563. Report.

§ 2560. Community doula expansion grant program. The community doula expansion grant program is established within the department.

§ 2561. Definitions. As used in this title:

1. "Eligible providers" shall mean community-based organizations providing for the recruitment, training, certification, supporting, and/or mentoring of community-based doulas.

2. "Community-based doula" shall mean a certified doula that provides culturally sensitive pregnancy and childbirth education, early linkage to health care, and aids birthing persons in navigating other services and supports that they may need to be healthy.

§ 2562. Rules and regulations. 1. The commissioner shall establish a community doula expansion grant program for eligible providers to receive funding in the performance of recruitment, training, certification, supporting, and/or mentoring of community-based doulas. Such eligible providers shall meet professionally recognized training standards, comply with applicable state law and regulations, and shall be capable of providing culturally congruent care.

2. The commissioner is authorized, within amounts appropriated for such purpose, to make grants in accordance with this subdivision. Such grants may be used for but not limited to the administration, faculty recruitment and development, start-up costs and other costs incurred for providing recruitment, training, certification, supporting, and/or mentoring of community-based doulas.

3. There shall be an emphasis of appropriating grants to eligible providers that specifically train, recruit, and employ doulas from historically vulnerable communities, BIPOC doulas, and bilingual doulas. This can include grants for doula apprentice programs.

4. The commissioner shall create and maintain an awareness and outreach program. The awareness and outreach program shall be established for the purpose of providing education and awareness of the available grants and funds to eligible providers in the state.

§ 2563. Report. The commissioner shall establish a comprehensive list of reporting metrics to be included in a report due on December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-six and annually thereafter, to the governor, to the temporary president of the senate, and to the speaker of the assembly. The report shall include the comprehensive list of reporting metrics and shall include, but not be limited to, the total amount of grants issued, the number of eligible providers, and the region of the state where the eligible provider is located.

§ 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-rr to read as follows:

§ 99-rr. Community doula expansion grant program fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and commissioner of taxation and finance a special fund to be known as the "Community doula expansion grant program fund".

2. Such fund shall consist of all monies appropriated thereto from any other fund or source pursuant to law. Nothing contained in this section shall prevent the state from receiving grants, gifts or bequests for the purposes of the fund as defined in this section and depositing them into the fund according to law.

3. Monies shall be payable from the fund on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers approved and certified by the commissioner of health.

4. The monies in such fund shall be expended for the community doula expansion grant program in accordance with the provisions of section twenty-five hundred sixty-two of the public health law.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.