



Memo in Support of S.3148 (Savino)/ A.2646 (Simotas)

Weill Cornell Medicine strongly supports S.3148 (Savino)/ A.2646 (Simotas) as a needed and appropriate step in ensuring that New Yorkers have access to effective treatment for the disease of infertility.

This legislation would require underwriters of large group health insurance in New York State to offer coverage of in-vitro fertilization (IVF) and fertility preservation for families who struggle with infertility. Both the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the World Health Organization recognize infertility as a disease. States such as Massachusetts, Texas and Connecticut have done the same and have mandated coverage options for IVF. As New York is considered a leader in the development of new and effective ways of treating infertility, New York should take a position of leadership in this important area of health policy and patient care as these other states have done.

IVF is the most successful treatment for infertility. And though current state law requires large group insurers cover some forms of infertility treatment, IVF is not among them. Oocyte cryopreservation, the most effective and widely practiced technique to preserve fertility, also achieves the same high success rates and it, too, is not one of the treatments currently mandated for insurance coverage under existing state laws. The state law governing insurance coverage for infertility was passed in 1990 and treatment options have advanced substantially in the last 25 years. As with many complex diseases that the medical community has had significant recent success in treating, therapies are cost-prohibitive for the average New Yorker without access to commercial insurance coverage.

The need for fertility preservation is growing. Now more than ever, effective clinical therapies for many diseases suffered by women during their years of fertility exist that previously had not. More advanced forms of chemotherapy are now used, for example, to treat rare forms of cancer in younger women. These treatments, however, can cause infertility, making oocyte cryopreservation the only effective option for conceiving. With treatments now available for many forms of cancer and infertility, women no longer need to choose between living and having a child. The state of commercial insurance coverage in New York should not force such a choice.

This legislation would rightly place infertility alongside the many other diseases suffered by New Yorkers for which insurers are required to cover the most effective treatments. We urge the legislature to assert New York State's leadership in this important area of patient care by passing this bill.

If you have any questions, please contact Daniel Pollay, Director of Government and Community Affairs, at Weill Cornell Medicine. (646) 962-9527