

# With Stillbirth Mothers' Lives at Risk in New York, Advocates Demand Change NOW

*Coalition of bereaved parents call for action by the State Legislature after New York Budget process fails to close Paid Family Leave loophole to protect lives.*

NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, May 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In light of National Women's Health Week (May 8-12, 2024) [PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy \(PUSH\)](#) is urging the NY State Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul to pass [A9635](#) to close a dangerous and cruel loophole in New York's Paid Family Leave (PFL) Law by the end of this legislative session. Current law denies mothers of stillborn babies their guaranteed weeks of paid time off following a traumatic childbirth. Every day four New York families suffer the devastating tragedy of stillbirth, and many of them are potentially victimized by this callous oversight in New York's Paid Family Leave program.

A9635 would prevent the state from revoking that previously-approved paid time off in the event of an unintended intrauterine death of a fetus after 20 weeks gestation (commonly known as a stillbirth). In 2023, a previous version of the bill passed unanimously in the Senate, but stalled in the Assembly. The dangerous situation this gap in PFL is creating was identified during initial 2024 budget negotiations by leadership of both houses of the Legislature and the Governor as an urgent issue to prioritize, but officials failed to come to a resolution. Now, the Legislature has until June 8 - when the current legislative session ends - to act on it. As champions for equitable maternal and postpartum health, Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato and Senator Shelley B. Mayer are the lead sponsors on the popular, bipartisan initiative which has stoked outrage among New Yorkers since the issue came to light.

PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy says families currently are forced to make the inhumane choice between a paycheck and taking time to safely recover during the early postpartum period. In the



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United States, approximately 40 percent of pregnancy-related maternal deaths occur within the first six weeks after childbirth. Additionally, women who suffer a stillbirth have been shown to be almost five times as likely to suffer severe maternal complications compared to those who deliver living babies.

Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato said, "The women advocating for the change in this law are the embodiment of strength. They have taken a horrible experience and are channeling that to fix our Paid Family Leave system in order to ensure that no woman will encounter a lack of support or workplace protection in the aftermath of a stillbirth. It is my honor to work with them and carry this legislation because we must do better for women in our State!"

"For thousands of women in New York, stillbirth is a personal and heartbreaking issue. Many years ago I spoke with these brave mothers who came to me to share their stories of stillbirth and their disappointment with the lack of support from the state during the toughest moments of their lives," said State Senator Shelley B. Mayer. "We have an obligation to do better for them. I am proud to sponsor this legislation in the Senate and am eager to get this done so more women will receive the support they deserve as soon as possible."

"Since May 2022 - when Cassidy Perrone, the stillbirth mother behind this bill, initially brought this issue to the Legislature's attention - approximately 1,200 NY stillbirth moms have had their Paid Family Leave revoked," said PUSH Executive Director Samantha Banerjee. "Until this dangerous gap in the PFL law is fixed, New York State continues to victimize up to four NY families every single day and, unthinkable, are doing so during the critical postpartum period when birthing people's lives are most at risk."

Learn more about the effort to change the Paid Family Leave law in New York in [this recent press conference](#).

Led by stillbirth mother, advocate, and influencer Ashley Spivey, the bill has generated thousands of constituent calls to the NYS elected officials and is endorsed by:

The Birthing Place / Womb Bus, founders of the upcoming Bronx birthing center  
Speak! Move! Change! collective (led by The ARIAH Foundation, Dr. Shalon's Maternal Action Project, and Tatia Oden French Memorial Foundation), which hosted the second annual National Postpartum Awareness Week last week

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson

Columbia University Irving Medical Center & Dr. Mary D'Alton (OBGYN Chair at New York-Presbyterian / Columbia University Irving Medical Center)

Dozens of other local and national maternal health nonprofits, healthcare providers, and birthworkers

About PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy

PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy is on a mission to end preventable stillbirth, and is not taking no for an answer. 65 babies die in the second half of pregnancy every single day in the U.S. -

that's 21,000 each year, most of them otherwise healthy, and all of them deeply loved. Many of these babies could have been saved. Working closely with medical researchers and doctors, PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy exists to cut the US stillbirth rate by 20% by the end of 2030, in half by 2050, and in time, eradicate all preventable stillbirths.

Learn more at [www.pushpregnancy.org](http://www.pushpregnancy.org)

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