

Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Women & Families Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 19, 2021, on Zoom**

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

MINUTES:

CB8M Members in Attendance: Vanessa Aronson, Elizabeth Ashby, Gayle Baron, Taina Borrero, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Saundrea I. Coleman, Rebecca Dangoor, Ed Hartzog, Valerie Mason, Peter Patch, Peggy Price, Rita Popper, Rami Sigal, Russell Squire, Elaine Walsh, and Shari Weiner.

1. Forum on Remote Vs. In-Person Working

Speakers at this special program shared their insights about today's evolving policies concerning remote vs. in-person working.

The lifting of lockdowns due to the coronavirus spawned a raft of differing practices about where and how to work safely. These varied policies—ranging from requirements to return to the office full-time, to continuing to work remotely, to some hybrid variation—have created widespread confusion, toughening workers' ability to plan their lives while earning a living.

What can people expect going forward? Speakers addressing the issue included Adam Galinsky, Professor of Leadership and Ethics at Columbia Business School; Anna A. Tavis, Academic Director and Professor of Human Capital Management at NYU; Tammy Sheffer, Chief People Officer at Solomon Partners; and, Sarah Dunn, Global Human Resources Officer at Tapestry, Inc.

Speakers agreed that it's still unclear how today's many policies on where to work will play out. However, most of the panelists felt hybrid working—partly onsite, partly offsite—will increasingly become the norm. As their attraction, hybrid practices would provide the working flexibility many employees desire. In turn, this accommodation, along with issues of health and safety, would likely prompt other attractive changes, especially in the design of offices. As one speaker noted, many workplaces "won't be the rows of cubicles" many workers had known. A more humanized arrangement, she said, will include "wider, more attractive and more interactive spaces."

Moreover, in a hybrid arrangement, working onsite will likely be focused on personal interactions with staffers, such as mentoring and team meetings, while tasks would be carried out offsite, speakers said.

In a hybrid arrangement, there's clearly no rule of thumb now about the amount of time people will spend at a workplace. For example, Tapestry's Sarah Dunn said that, when her company's corporate office begins hybrid working in January, "the vast majority of employees will be working hybrid." For

these people, time spent in the office will range from three times a week to once a month—with office time determined between employees and their bosses. (All hybrid workers will have to live within commuting distance of the office, she said.)

Solomon Partners' hybrid arrangements began some two months ago. In this process, junior bankers are typically in the office three-to-four times a week, while senior bankers typically come to the office one-to-two times a week. Solomon Partners' Tammy Sheffer explained that senior bankers' time in the office is "very scheduled," and, while in the office, they "probably spend more time" with their workers than in the past.

Speakers agreed that hybrid working models require more effort on the part of employers—to ensure workers feel supported, appreciated, and included. Issues such as fairness, socializing, mentoring, and teamwork all need to be reconsidered in light of what Prof. Galinsky called "the new reality." According to Ms. Sheffer, Solomon Partners aims to build staff connections through such processes as creating social events, fireside chats, networking lunches, mentorship circles, among a range of other offerings.

Moreover, speakers mentioned that demographic issues, including the need for childcare, must be taken into account. Pointing out that childcare in the U.S. tends to be limited in availability and expensive, Sarah Dunn said her company is helping with emergency childcare needs. And at Tapestry, "our male colleagues are involved with childcare."

2. The Growing Threat to Abortion Rights: What We Can Do

Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright addressed the all-out assault on abortion rights in the U.S., in which a record 165 such restrictions have been passed this year. Texas' law made headlines after that state enacted a nearly total ban on abortion--the toughest such statute in the nation. In contrast, New York State remains a safe harbor for abortion rights, aided by the 2019 passage of the Reproductive Health Act, which codified Roe V. Wade in New York.

Assembly Member Seawright expressed disappointment that only 104 state legislators—far fewer than needed—belong to the legislature's bipartisan pro-choice caucus. She suggested that meeting attendees reach out to legislators in conservative districts, requesting that they join the caucus.

Three bills pending in the Assembly, which Ms. Seawright co-sponsored, address abortion rights. The first bill covers dedicated access to abortion funding; the second provides parity for reproductive care; the third calls for comprehensive sex education in schools.

At the meeting, Community Board attendees unanimously passed a resolution urging passage of the three Assembly bills that expand abortion rights and supporting the legislature's bipartisan, pro-choice caucus. (Details of the Assembly bills are attached below.)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS a growing number of states are enacting barriers to safe, legal abortions--a right enshrined in the Supreme Court's ruling in the Roe Vs. Wade decision; and,
WHEREAS New York State maintains a strong commitment to reproductive rights and health services; and,

WHEREAS pending bills in the New York State Assembly—A1926, A7573, and A6616--would strengthen access to reproductive care for all New Yorkers; and ,

WHEREAS Bill A1926 would amend the state finance law to establish an abortion access fund, which would break down income barriers, and aid access, to reproductive health care; and,

WHEREAS Bill A7573 would require that insurance policies in New York State cover pregnancy termination procedures in every hospital, surgical or medical facility offering maternity care; and,

WHEREAS Bill A6616 would require comprehensive sexuality education for students in grades K-12; and,

WHEREAS the state legislature's bipartisan Pro-Choice Caucus advocates for a woman's reproductive health care and the right therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 Manhattan strongly supports State Assembly Bills A1926 and A7573 to enhance abortion rights and Bill A6616 to provide comprehensive sexuality education in schools. The Board further supports the state legislature's bi-partisan pro-choice caucus, which advocates for women's reproductive health services and rights.

VOTE: 17-0-0

In Favor: Vanessa Aronson, Elizabeth Ashby, Gayle Baron, Taina Borrero, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Saundra I. Coleman, Rebecca Dangoor, Ed Hartzog, Valerie Mason, Peter Patch, Peggy Price, Rita Popper, Rami Sigal, Russell Squire, Elaine Walsh, and Shari Weiner.

Details of State Assembly Bills A1926, A7573 and A6616 attached.

P. Gayle Baron and Margaret Price, Co-Chairs



Bill No.:

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A01926 Memo:

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION
submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, Sec 1(f)

BILL NUMBER: A1926

SPONSOR: Reyes

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the state finance law and the tax law, in relation to establishing the abortion access fund and allowing taxpayers to make a gift to such fund on their personal income tax returns

PURPOSE:

To break down barriers and aid in access to reproductive healthcare

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1 adds a new section 99–hh to the state finance law, which sets about the parameters of the abortion access fund as established by the comptroller and commissioner of health.

Section 2 adds a new section 630–g to the tax law establishes the abortion access fund.

Section 3 sets the effective date.

JUSTIFICATION:

Establishing the abortion access fund, which allows taxpayers to make gifts to the fund from their income tax returns, will help to break down barriers to abortion care.

One in four women will have an abortion by the age of 45*. Despite the common and necessary nature of this health care service, economic and logistical barriers can make it difficult to access this care. In 2019, the legislature passed the Reproductive Health Act, affirming the fundamental right to abortion care here in New York. As states across this country enact dangerous legislation that severely restricts or outright bans access to abortion care, New York must continue to demonstrate its strong commitment to reproductive freedom and bodily autonomy. This bill provides an effective means to improve access to this health care service and affords the majority of New York taxpayers who support the right to abortion care, the ability to personally contribute to entities that help to make that right a reality for those who are financially struggling.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

2020 – Referred to Ways & Means

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

To be determined.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately.
*https://www.guttmachenorennews–release/2017/abortion–common–experience–us–women–despite–dramatic–declines–rates



Bill No.:

A07573

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A07573 Memo:

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION
submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, Sec 1(f)

BILL NUMBER: A7573

SPONSOR: Gonzalez-Rojas

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the insurance law, in relation to requiring that provision be made for pregnancy termination procedures in every individual or group policy or contract which provides coverage or indemnity for hospital, surgical or medical care and which offers maternity care coverage

PURPOSE:

This bill requires provision be made for pregnancy termination procedures in every hospital, surgical or medical policy offering maternity care coverage

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1 reviews the legislative intent.

Section 2 amends section 3216 subsection (i) of the insurance law by adding a new paragraph 36 (a-c) to require that every insurance policy providing maternity care coverage to also provide coverage for pregnancy termination.

Section 3 amends section 3221 subsection (k) of the insurance law by adding a new paragraph 22 (a-d) to require that every insurance policy providing maternity care coverage to also provide coverage for pregnancy termination.

Section 4 amends section 4303 of the insurance law by adding subsection ss 1-4 to require that every insurance policy providing maternity care coverage to also provide coverage for pregnancy termination.

Section 5 defines severability.

Section 6 is the effective date.

JUSTIFICATION:

The ability for people to control their reproductive lives – including the ability to end a pregnancy – is a cornerstone of reproductive health and justice. Opponents have worked to erode access by excluding reproductive health care from insurance coverage, rendering access to care cost-prohibitive for too many people. Our state's history stands against this: New York has a long legacy of requiring coverage of reproductive health care in both our public and private insurance programs.

Given states and the federal government's hostility toward abortion, it is particularly critical that New York continue this legacy by enacting legislation that codifies in statute the requirement that private insurers cover abortion. This will reduce barriers to abortion care in New York and build on the momentum of other states that have already passed similar requirements.

This legislation would codify a requirement that insurance plans cover abortion where they already cover maternity care – this would improve

upon, and fill gaps in, the current regulatory coverage requirement and create parity between types of pregnancy-related care.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New bill.

STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

None to the State.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law and shall apply to all policies and contracts issued, renewed, modified, altered, or amended on or after such date.

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Bill No.: A06616

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A06616 Memo:

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION

submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, Sec 1(f)

BILL NUMBER:

A6616

SPONSOR:

Nolan

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the education law, in relation to comprehensive sexual-ity education in schools

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this legislation is to provide students with a comprehen-sive sexuality education that is age appropriate, medically accurate, and inclusive of all students.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1- Amends the education law by adding a new section 804-e. Paragraph one requires each public and charter school to provide students in grades kindergarten through twelve with comprehensive sexu-ality education. Paragraph two requires the commissioner in consultation with the commissioner of health to develop a sexuality education program. Paragraph three directs the commissioner to consult a broad range of experts in the development of the program. Paragraph four directs the commissioner to prescribe in regulations the contents and topics to be included in sexuality education.

Paragraph five requires the commissioner to issue guidance to school districts and publish model curricula on the State Education Department website. Instruction shall occur no later than the school year following the effective date. Paragraph six instructs boards of education that elect not to adopt the model curricula to establish diverse advisory groups to make recommendations regarding the curriculum, content, of sexuality education for the school district that conforms in content and scope to the comprehensive sexuality education program established by the commissioner. Paragraph seven requires school districts to establish a process for parents to opt their child out of select lessons regarding HIV/AIDS preven tion, in accordance with current regulations. Paragraph eight defines the term "comprehensive sexuality education".

Section 2 – Effective Date

EXISTING LAW:

This is a new section of law.

JUSTIFICATION:

New York does not currently require sex education to be taught in schools beyond certain requirements related to HIV/AIDS. Of the public schools that do provide sex education, the curriculum is often inaccu-rate, incomplete, or biased. It often fails to prepare students to make healthy, informed, and consensual decisions about relationships. LGBTQ relationships are often stigmatized or ignored entirely. Even basic information about anatomy is inaccurate, and materials often reinforce negative gender stereotypes.

Comprehensive sexuality education covers issues like healthy relation-ships, body image, and self-esteem. In kindergarten, that looks like basic lessons about friendship and communication, providing students with the building blocks they need to tackle issues like consent and sexual health years later in middle and high school. At older ages those lessons include health matters like preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Comprehensive sexuality education results in improved educational outcomes for students. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analysis of social-emotional skills program led to significant reductions in dropout rates.

Studies have also found that students who receive comprehensive sexual-ity education delay the initiation and reduce the frequency of sexual intercourse, have fewer sexual partners, and practice safe sex. Current-ly 3 in 10 women in New York become pregnant at least once before their 20th birthdays, and teenagers represent about 50% of the new STI cases in New York.

Comprehensive sexuality education is about more than reducing the rates of STIs and unintended pregnancy. Educating students about dating violence prevention, consent, and healthy relationships will reduce interpersonal violence, sexual harassment, and toxic relationships. The MeToo movement is part of a reckoning about the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and violence in our culture. Young people are, unfortunately, not immune. Nationally, more than two thirds of teenagers who are or have been in a relationship report experiencing some form of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. In New York City, about 12 percent of teenagers reported experiencing physical dating violence. Without comprehensive sexuality education, sexual harassment and toxic relation-ships will continue to spread.

Comprehensive sexuality education will also make schools safer places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual students are almost twice as likely as hetero-sexual students to report not going to school because they felt unsafe at, or on their way to or from, school. For transgender and gender non-confirming youth, school can be even more difficult: in New York, 74% of transgender students (or those perceived as transgender) experience some form of mistreatment: 50% were verbally harassed, 23% report being physically assaulted, and 12% experienced sexual violence between kindergarten and 12th grade. School victimization has been linked with decreased academic achievement, increased suicide ideation, increased rates of absenteeism, and negative impacts on their emotional health. Comprehensive sexuality education that dispels stigma around sexuality and gender combats discrimination, bullying, and harassment and promotes respect for all youth.

Across party lines, parents overwhelmingly support comprehensive sexual-ity education in schools. According to a national poll of parents, 93.5% feel it is important that sex education is taught in middle school, and 96% feel it is important that sex education is taught in high school. All young people deserve the knowledge, skills, and resources to make healthy and informed decisions about their bodies and relationships. Comprehensive sexuality education will empower and educate students to protect their health and build their futures – without shame or judg-ment. It is critical that New York students receive this education.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

A.6512– 2019/2020

A.10517– 2018

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

To be determined.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

July 1, 2024

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