

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
SENATE, No. 4119

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 4, 2024

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 4119.

As amended, this bill requires hospitals that provide maternity services and birthing centers licensed in this State to adopt and maintain written policies and procedures authorizing a patient to select a doula of the patient's choice to accompany the patient within the facility's premises for the purposes of providing support before, during, and after labor and childbirth.

Under the provisions of the bill, each hospital and birthing center will be required to provide a written copy of those policies and procedures to: each health care provider providing maternity services at the facility; each patient receiving maternity services at the facility; any other person, at the request of the patient; nearby reproductive health service providers, including, but not limited to, Planned Parenthood health clinics; and nearby local WIC agencies and clinic offices.

Each hospital and birthing center will be required to post a summary of the facility's policies and procedures adopted pursuant to the bill on the facility's Internet website. The hospital or birthing center will make the summary available in the 10 languages most commonly spoken in New Jersey, and, at the discretion of the Commissioner of Health, in such additional languages as the commissioner deems appropriate.

Each hospital and birthing center will designate a staff member to serve as a liaison between the facility and doulas and doula organizations in order to provide information concerning the facility's policies and procedures adopted pursuant to the bill.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the definition of "hospital" to mean every general or special hospital licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) that provides maternity services.

The committee amendments require each hospital and birthing center to provide a written copy of the policies and procedures adopted pursuant to the bill to nearby reproductive health service providers, including, but not limited to, Planned Parenthood health clinics, and nearby local WIC agencies and clinic offices.

The committee amendments provide that each hospital and birthing center will post a summary of the policies and procedures adopted pursuant to the bill on the facility's Internet website. As introduced, the bill required each hospital and birthing center to post a notice of the policies and procedures in the room of certain patients and on the facility's Internet website.

The committee amendments require each hospital and birthing center to make the summary of the policies and procedures available on the facility's Internet website in the 10 languages most commonly spoken in New Jersey, and, at the discretion of the Commissioner of Health, in such additional languages as the commissioner deems appropriate.