



NOW- NEW YORK STATE SUPPORTS

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Abandoned Infants

A11111 (Paulin) S2950D (Klein)

NOW-NYS (National Organization for Women) supports the new abandoned-infants legislation A 6092 (Paulin) and S 2950D (Klein), which would amend the 2000 Abandoned Infant Protection Act. This bill eliminates criminal liability for persons who leave infants in safe, appropriate, locations before the child is thirty days old.

But because this bill does not remove an existing requirement for determining the identity of the woman abandoning an infant, we support it with some reservation. The majority of women who abandon their babies are living under extreme duress and are often hiding from abusers. Such women are sometimes victims of incest or rape. In these cases, the very process of determining the woman's identity could easily put that woman in danger. So we urge the NYS Legislature to, at some future date, look closely at removing the identity requirement.

Furthermore, many dead newborns are found each year in the New York City area alone. So the Legislature should also consider that elimination of the identity requirement will greatly reduce the possibility of infanticide and unsafe abandonment for women who fear being found out by abusive parents or spouses.

In spite of its shortcomings, NOW-NYS believes this bill takes us one small step forward to protecting women who must abandon their babies. So we support the bill and continue to hope for improvement.

Marcia A. Pappas
President NOW-NYS