We are writing on behalf of the undersigned organizations that provide and support critical human services in New York. **We strongly support the New York Health Act S.4840/A.4738 (NYHA) and call on you to pass this legislation this year.**

We are at a critical juncture for healthcare in New York. Currently, 1.7 million New Yorkers remain without health insurance, and uncertainty around healthcare at the federal level means that the insurance status of 2.7 million more New Yorkers hangs in the balance. Proposed changes to Medicare and Medicaid could be devastating for older adults, low income children and families, and other at-risk New Yorkers.

The time to move to a single payer system that extends universal, comprehensive health insurance to all New Yorkers, is now. Passing the New York Health Act would not only protect New Yorkers from threats to healthcare on the federal level, but it would create the first truly accessible, truly equitable health insurance system in the United States.

As nonprofit human services providers, the New York Health Act would not only benefit our organizations and our employees, but also the clients that we serve.

The cost of health insurance to employers has increased over 50% in the last decade, and is estimated to go up 7% this year alone. For nonprofit providers who operate at the margins and often on bare-bones budgets, ever-increasing premiums make it increasingly untenable to provide quality health insurance to our employees. In contrast, under the New York Health Act, the estimated average payroll assessment would decline from nearly 13% to 8%.

For individuals and families, the cost of health insurance has doubled since 2008. Simultaneously, co-payments and deductibles have increased, meaning that even for New Yorkers that are insured, many do not receive the care they need. The New York Health Act would make health insurance more affordable by creating a progressive taxation system based on ability to pay, which would reduce health care costs for 98% of New Yorkers.

For many of the clients that we serve, the New York Health Act would make health care affordable and accessible for the first time. NYHA would cover all New York state residents regardless of employment, immigration status, financial status, age, disability, or pre-existing condition. This legislation would create an affordable and equitable health care system for all, making health care a right in New York, rather than a privilege for those that can afford it.

The benefits of the NYHA go far beyond providing for equitable access to high quality healthcare for all New Yorkers and reducing the burden on nonprofit providers. By correcting underpayments on Medicaid, New York as a whole would still experience massive cost savings through reducing administrative costs, broadening the risk pool and leveraging group purchasing power. This makes the New York Health Act not only a moral imperative, but a fiscally responsible choice as well.

Now is the time for the New York State legislature to listen to the people—and the growing movement for this bill—who want a health care system that guarantees access to care as a public good, that is affordable, that is good for patients, employers, health care workers, and hospitals. It is time to pass the New York Health Act.