

MEDICAID FUNDING OF ABORTIONS

The League believes that low-income women should have the same access to legal medical procedures for which income-independent women are able to pay. From 1978 through 1997, the League lobbied against attempts to withdraw this funding in New York State. The 1995 budget negotiations included language that would mandate family planning counseling before a Medicaid funded abortion. The League opposed this budget language and, as a result of vigorous lobbying, it was not included as part of the budget. The League has and will continue to monitor this very important right for low-income women. (See Reproductive Rights, Hope v. Perales in the Government section.) During every budget vote, anti-abortion legislators have unsuccessfully attempted to delete Medicaid funding from the state's budget.

Medicaid funding for women of low income was included in the "bare-bones" budget passed in August 2001.

Medicaid funding for women of low income has not been an issue during 2002 or 2003 budget mainly due to the large state budget deficits and the need by legislators not to provide any other issue for holding up the agreed to budget. Of particular note, during the 2005 legislative session the Senate took up the issue of Medicaid funding fully two-months after the budget was passed. The debate on this issue was extremely anti-woman and done primarily to appease the Conservative party and the Catholic conference. The Assembly did not address any abortion related legislation. Medicaid funding for low-income abortions was not addressed during the budget in late March 2007. However, the Senate introduced it in late May 2007. It passed the Senate only and was judged non-germane in the Assembly. No action on any other reproductive choice legislation was taken in the 2006 or 2007 session.