

# Joint Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services

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**Meeting Summary**  
**May 20, 2024 • 12:00 PM**

## **Attendees:**

### Eastern Panel Members

Kathy Halas  
Mary McCarthy  
Carrie Smith

### NYC Panel Members

David Lansner  
Jocelyn Brown

### Western Panel Members

John Treahy

### WRI Solutions

Kerri Barglof  
Felicia LaClair  
Darlene Ward

### Guests

- Andrew Block, *Deputy Chief of Staff & Director of Communications for Sen. Salazar*
- Julie Fetter, *Director of Advocacy & Committee on Crime Victims, Crime & Correction for Sen. Salazar*
- Sonia Wiecek, *Director of Outreach & Legislative Research for Sen. Salazar*
- Mark Mishler, *Counsel & Legislative Director for Sen. Salazar*

## **Welcome**

The meeting commenced at 12:03 p.m.

## **Informed Consent Bill Discussion**

Jocelyn Brown, Vice Chair of the New York City Panel, is leading the efforts around the Informed Consent Bill on behalf of the Panels and sought an update on its current status. The bill is currently in the Women's Issues Committee on the Senate side and in the third round on the Assembly side. However, the bill faced significant opposition when it was brought to the Assembly floor about a month ago. Members of the majority party spoke against the bill, leading to a protracted debate and its subsequent withdrawal.

Given these challenges, it is unlikely the bill will advance in either house during the remaining two and a half weeks of the legislative session, prompting plans to reintroduce it next year. A major theme of opposition includes concerns that the bill could interfere with physicians' duties and their relationship with their patients, and that there are no barriers to prevent unhealthy outcomes for babies if the bill became law.

To advance the bill, supporters are advised to focus on education and advocacy. This includes informing legislators and the public about the bill's intent and addressing misconceptions,

particularly those held by the New York American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), which has expressed concerns about legislative overreach in medical practice.

Ms. Brown emphasized the importance of universal screening and informed consent to encourage maternal healthcare participation. She pointed out disparities in who gets tested and noted that misunderstanding among physicians has led to significant reporting increases. Clarifying why ACOG New York opposes the bill, while their own national body supports it, is also crucial.

If the bill does not progress by June 6th, it will not be revisited until January, allowing time for adjustments and re-drafting. Support from organizations like Child Advocacy Centers and child welfare groups such as CRP can be instrumental in refining and advocating for the bill's passage. Specific, dialogue-oriented support is necessary to address concerns and enhance the bill's prospects.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 12:30 p.m.