



February 11, 2025

Dear Chair Krueger, Chair Pretlow and esteemed members of the NY State Senate Finance Committee and NY State Assembly Ways and Means Committee:

**The Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP) respectfully urges you to include coverage for obesity treatment in state-regulated commercial insurance and Medicaid in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26 Executive Budget, consistent with introduced legislation ([S03104](#), [A04211](#), [A2715](#)).**

As an organization focused on women's preventive health, AWHP recognizes that obesity is a chronic disease with a significant impact on women and the state of New York.

- [More than 25% of New York women](#) are affected by obesity, with a [disproportionate impact](#) on women of color.
- Obesity is [associated with over 200 health complications](#), including many that specifically affect women, such as [breast and ovarian cancers](#) and [fertility challenges](#).
- Women with obesity are more likely to face **harmful social stigma and discrimination** — including [earning up to 9% less](#) than women not living with obesity.

Obesity also has a tremendous economic burden, highlighting the urgent need for effective prevention and strategies.

- In 2022 alone, obesity and overweight cost the **New York economy approximately [\\$37.3 billion](#)** and caused **New York employers to spend an extra [\\$3.2 billion](#)** on health-related absenteeism and disability costs.

AWHP believes that **insurance coverage for the full scope of obesity care options**—including counseling or intensive behavioral therapy, nutrition services, behavior modification, bariatric surgeries, and obesity management medications (OMMs)—**is critical to improving women's health across New York.**

Even though obesity has serious consequences, especially for women, **insurance barriers keep the full range of obesity care options out of reach** for many women. That is why **we support legislation introduced in both the NY State Senate and Assembly (S03104 (Cooney), A04211 (Reyes) and A2715 (Reyes)) that would require comprehensive health insurance coverage for obesity treatment** by both state-regulated commercial insurance and NY Medicaid.

New obesity treatments could transform how we manage obesity and prevent associated health complications. **Comprehensive coverage for these and other obesity care options could**

**improve the health of millions of New Yorkers** living with obesity and protect the state from incurring additional medical costs from treating serious health complications linked to obesity.

We applaud Governor Kathy Hochul's call for increased access to lifesaving obesity treatments in her [2025 State of the State Address](#) and urge the New York State Senate and Assembly to include such provisions in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26 Executive Budget.

**If you care about women's health, you must care about obesity too.**

Respectfully,

Millicent Gorham  
CEO, Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention