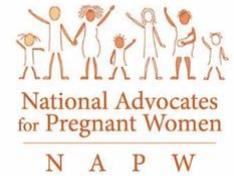


## Broadening the Conversation About and Celebration of New York's Reproductive Health Act (RHA)



- The RHA protects and values *all* women – including those who support abortion rights, those who profoundly oppose them, and everyone in between.
- The RHA recognizes that pregnant women deserve equal rights. In other words, it is not just about abortion rights or even reproductive health, it is about protecting the rights and personhood of women.
- The RHA makes clear, as the decision in *Roe v. Wade* does, that at all stages of pregnancy the State's paramount interest must be in protecting and preserving a woman's life and health. In other words, there is not a point in pregnancy when a woman loses her rights to life and health.
- All women benefit from the RHA's validation of their worth as full human beings who are valued not only for their physical lives but also for their health including their physical and mental health: The RHA affirms for all women that both their physical and emotional lives are valued.
- The RHA ensures that the health care that women need will be regulated by the public health system, not the criminal law system.
- Women who have abortions may identify as “pro-choice” or as adamantly “pro-life.” As reported in Katie Wilson's book, *Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law & Policies of Ordinary Abortion*, even anti-abortion protesters sometimes have abortions. None of these people should have to worry that they might be arrested for having an abortion. The RHA ensures that no woman – regardless of her views on abortion – will be locked up for having an abortion.
- Anti-abortion organizations including March for Life, National Right to Life Committee, and the Susan B. Anthony List have specifically spoken out against criminal penalties for a woman who has an abortion. The RHA removed those penalties, a result that we hope will be celebrated by all organizations opposed to locking women up for having abortions.
- According to both state and federal law, all adults of sound mind have a right to make medical decisions about their health and lives. There is no exception for women, including women who are pregnant. Nevertheless, in the past, some doctors, prosecutors, and judges in New York claimed that the state's criminal abortion law provided a basis for denying pregnant women the right to refuse cesarean surgery or any other medical interventions doctors asserted were needed to keep a fetus alive. The RHA protects pregnant women who are going to term and through all stages of pregnancy including labor and delivery.
- The RHA assures women like Erika Christensen that their heartbreak at learning the fetus she is carrying cannot survive - will not be exacerbated by laws prohibiting and criminalizing abortion.

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