

**Memorandum in Support – S1196 (Senator Persaud)/A1673 (Assemblymember Hunter)**  
**Requires health insurance policies and Medicaid to cover biomarker testing for certain purposes**

The American Nurses Association-New York (ANA-NY), on behalf of its members and their patients, **supports** the passage of S1196/A1673 (Persaud/Hunter), which would require New York State health insurance policies and Medicaid to cover patient biomarker testing. ANA-NY is a professional nursing organization representing the interests of New York State's 360,000 registered nurses. ANA-NY advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing care, supporting the professional and educational advancement of nurses, and promoting the welfare of nurses to the end that all people may have better health care.

Biomarker is the analysis of a patient's tissue, blood, or other biospecimen for the presence of a biomarker. Biomarker testing is a crucial step for accessing precision medicine, especially for cancer patients. Progress in improving cancer outcomes increasingly involves the use of precision medicine, which uses information about a person's own genes or proteins to prevent, diagnose, or treat diseases like cancer. Biomarker testing enables targeted therapies that can lead to improved survivorship and better quality of life for cancer patients.

Biomarker testing is increasingly important for cancer care—and for the treatment of other diseases. Two out of three oncology drugs launched in the past five years require or recommend biomarker testing prior to use. Eighty oncology drugs now require biomarker testing prior to use, up from twenty in 2011.

Unfortunately, not all communities in New York State benefit from the latest advancements in biomarker testing and precision medicine. Patients who are older, Black, uninsured or Medicaid-insured, live in rural communities, and those who get their care in a community setting versus academic medical centers, are less likely to be tested for certain guideline-indicated biomarkers. One of ANA-NY's top priorities is improving patient outcomes by addressing the disparities in health equity. Far too often, zip codes determine the state of individuals' health and access to care. This legislation would help to redress these disparities by improving patient quality of life and causing better health outcomes.

For these reasons, ANA-NY **supports** the passage of S1196/A1673 (Persaud/Hunter).