



**Memorandum in Support
(S.4944/Hannon)**

The Children's Health Fund (CHF) supports Senate Bill 4944, as introduced by State Senator Hannon, which would establish the New York Health Care Electronic Infrastructure Board ("The Board") to support and guide ongoing development of electronic health records. Health care providers in the state need guidance and standards to approach the transition from paper to electronic health records. The Board would provide a forum for ideas and innovative technologies as well as ensure future uniformity in adoption, which will aid in the overall goal of interoperable health information technology: technology that allows a patient's record to follow the patient from a community health center to a specialist to a hospital, seamlessly.

The health care community is faced with an enormous challenge in adopting electronic health records, with private physicians lagging behind the rest of the field. Community health centers are also at a disadvantage when adopting health information technology, as human and fiscal resources are scarce. The will to convert to electronic health records is strong, but the ongoing fiscal challenge beyond the initial investment is large, with many systems requiring support well beyond adoption. Beyond help with investment, many providers and community health centers need guidance that would come from standards and leadership provided by the health care infrastructure board established by this bill.

The Children's Health Fund has integrated health information technology with its National Network partners, including the New York Children's Health Project, for over a decade. CHF first recognized the need for electronic health records when faced with the inability to store thousands of medical records on a mobile medical unit. Over the years, CHF's electronic health records system has gone through many iterations and upgrades. Calling on this experience with health technology, CHF is uniquely versed in the struggle to integrate technology into the traditional health experience. CHF encourages you to support A. 4944 as a first step in integrating health care technology in doctor's offices, community health centers and hospitals throughout the state.

The Children's Health Fund (CHF), working with hospitals and health centers throughout the country, has provided comprehensive pediatric care to more than 300,000 medically underserved children since its inception in 1987. By providing a medical home to thousands of children through 17 programs in 13 states and the District of Columbia, CHF recognizes the importance of public health insurance programs to ensure continuity of care, the continuation of a child's access to a medical home.