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*of blessed memory

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Choose Healthy Life Congratulates New York State on Groundbreaking Medicaid 1115 Waiver Amendment

Waiver will address health disparities throughout the state

[Choose Healthy Life](#) (CHL), a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing health disparities through the Black church, congratulates Governor Kathy Hochul and New York State on securing the [Medicaid 1115 waiver amendment](#). This transformative amendment will invest nearly \$6 billion of federal funding into the state's health care system over the next three years, with a focus on health equity and reducing disparities.

"Health is a right, not a privilege," stated **Rev. Al Sharpton**, Co-Chair of Choose Healthy Life's National Black Clergy Health Leadership Council. "This amendment is a crucial step towards achieving health equity in New York State. It underscores the urgent need to prioritize Black communities who have long been marginalized by systemic barriers in healthcare."

The waiver amendment, aimed at improving health equity and supporting safety net hospitals, represents a significant commitment to addressing social determinants of health that disproportionately affect Black and underserved communities. Choose Healthy Life was a strong and vocal advocate for the amendment which will help fund life-saving services and sustain workforces for social needs such as health, nutrition, and housing.

"We applaud and thank Governor Hochul for being an active leader in addressing health disparities in our communities," said **Debra Fraser-Howze**, Founder and Board Chair of Choose Healthy Life. "We strongly advocated for this waiver in keeping with our work to ensure and sustain the vital role that faith-based organizations like Choose Healthy Life play in delivering and connecting underserved communities to much needed health services."

By funding and supporting Black churches to establish and train a trusted faith-based health navigator in their respective communities, CHL has reached approximately 24 million individuals, hosted over 4,000 events at which over 200,000 COVID-19 vaccines and tests were administered or distributed. In New York, through its collaboration with [United Way of New York City](#), CHL works with 20 churches spread across the five boroughs of New York City to conduct its work. With additional support, CHL expects to expand to other Black churches within the state.

"This amendment is vital resource for our organization to continue the fight against health disparities," **Rev. Jacques DeGraff**, CHL New York Clergy Leader said. "Choose Healthy Life is proud to have worked with our congressional delegation under the leadership of Governor Hochul to further our mission in New York State, serving those most in need and working towards health equity."

"This amendment is a lifeline to the Black community," **Rev. Kimberly L. Williams**, Executive Director of Choose Healthy Life said. "Our work in partnership with the Black church in NYC has already shown significant results, reaching millions and providing vital health services. This funding will allow us to expand our reach and deepen our impact across the state, furthering our mission to provide free health services to communities that often go overlooked."

About Choose Healthy Life

Choose Healthy Life (CHL) is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing health disparities through the Black church by establishing and training a trusted faith-based health navigator to educate, deliver and connect the community to much needed health services. For more information, visit www.choosehealthylife.org.

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