

**Testimony of Robert Purvis**  
**Executive Vice President, New York Blood Center Enterprises (NYBCe)**  
*In Support of Section 5 of*  
**SB 1083- AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**STATUTES**  
Public Health Committee Public Hearing, March, 29, 2021

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Somers, Senator Hwang, Representative Petit, and Esteemed Members of the Public Health Committee, **thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Section 5 of Senate Bill 1083- AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES.**

My name is Robert Purvis, Executive Vice President of New York Blood Center Enterprises (NYBCe), a nonprofit, community-based blood center providing blood products and services to over 500 hospitals across the country, including Hartford Healthcare and Yale New Haven Health System in Connecticut. One of our divisions, Rhode Island Blood Center (RIBC), distributes and collects blood throughout the state of Connecticut and will open a new blood donation and distribution center in Middletown in the coming months. RIBC and NYBCe are deeply committed to maintaining a healthy blood supply for the millions of patients we serve.

We support Section 5 of the bill, which would permit 16-year-olds to donate blood with their parent or guardian's written authorization. The need for blood has never been greater. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many mobile blood drives have been canceled, and blood centers have had to rework the way they collect blood to ensure the safety of donors and staff. The ongoing challenge of now asking donors to come to a donor center has put additional strains on an already tight blood supply. With the added impact of an aging blood donor pool, the inclusion of 16-year-old blood donors will significantly increase the number of eligible donors. Both NYBCe and RIBC have experience collecting blood from 16-year-olds and have done so safely for years in New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and many other states that permit 16-year-olds to donate with parent or guardian permission. In 2019, RIBC successfully collected blood donations from over 4,000 16-year-old donors.

NYBCe continues to work 24/7 to maintain the blood supply in our communities and help save the lives of cancer patients, accident, burn, and trauma victims, pregnant women, transplant recipients, surgery patients, and many more. Thank you for your attention and consideration of this matter.

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