



STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
ALBANY 12224

VETO # 87

December 5, 2025

TO THE SENATE:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, the following bill:

Senate Bill Number 4423, entitled:

“AN ACT to amend the estates, powers and trusts law, in relation to the payment and distribution of damages in wrongful death actions”

NOT APPROVED

This bill would significantly alter the legal framework for wrongful death actions in New York by expanding the types of damages that may be recovered, expanding the class of persons who may seek such damages and extending the statute of limitations.

The depth of grief and sorrow from losing a loved one because of the careless actions of another is indescribable. As I have said before, I very much believe that grieving families should be able to turn to the courts for justice, accountability and meaningful compensation for their loss. As the advocates calling for change have highlighted, the justice system often perpetuates inequities by valuing human life based on earning potential.

Over the last few years, the Legislature has passed legislation that would make sweeping changes to New York’s wrongful death jurisprudence. While well-intentioned, these changes would likely have resulted in higher costs to patients and consumers as well as other unintended consequences. For the fourth year in a row, the Legislature has passed a bill that continues to pose significant risks to consumers, without many of the changes I expressed openness to in previous communications. At a time when the State is facing an affordability crisis and many struggle just to meet basic needs, genuine concerns continue to be raised that the bill may lead to increased costs, including increased insurance premiums and increased financial stress to our healthcare systems, including those that serve disadvantaged communities.

I believe that every human life is valuable. I remain committed to working collaboratively to find solutions that support affected families while avoiding unintended consequences. Further deliberations are needed; however, at this time, I am constrained to veto this bill.

The bill is disapproved.

*Kathy Hochul*