MFP and Partners Attend the Joint Senate Task Force on Opioids, Addiction, and Overdose Prevention Roundtable

[Photo subtitle] Participants with Senator Gustavo Rivera at the February 19th Joint Senate Task Force on Opioids, Addiction, and Overdose Prevention Roundtable.

Movement for Family Power, The Bronx Defenders, and New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera representing the Bronx’s 33rd Senate District coordinated the roundtable to explore the intersections of drug use, pregnancy, parenting, and criminalization. The roundtable highlighted how drug testing of pregnant people, new parents, and their infants without their knowledge or consent and subsequent reporting to CPS exposes families to potential forced family separation and harmful surveillance. Forced family separation has been proven to have long-lasting negative effects and cause trauma that reverberates across generations and communities.
All people, including those who use drugs, have a right to informed consent. Yet, every day in New York mothers are being separated from their newborns due to unconsented drug testing that is medically unnecessary and arguably violates medical ethics. Advocates gathered at the roundtable to call for new legislation to require informed consent before drug testing in maternal care settings. This roundtable was part of a larger ongoing effort to raise awareness about the injustice of unconsented drug testing of pregnant people, new parents, and their infants, and the feeding of children into the foster system.

Want to learn more? Read our policy brief, [Family Separation in the Medical Setting: The Need for Informed Consent](https://www.movepower.org/family-separation-in-the-medical-setting/the-need-for-informed-consent/).