

September 27, 2018

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgess
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Pallone, Chairman Burgess and Ranking Member Green:

Our organizations commend you for holding today's hearing, "Better Data and Better Outcomes: Reducing Maternal Mortality in the U.S." We would like to express our support for the discussion draft of H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act, sponsored by Representatives Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA), Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Ryan Costello (R-PA) that is being considered today, which mirrors S. 1112, the Maternal Health Accountability Act, as recently advanced by the Senate HELP Committee.

Our nation faces a growing crisis in maternal health. More women die from pregnancy-related complications in the United States than in any other developed country, and the rate of maternal deaths continues to rise. Major disparities in maternal mortality exist, with black women three to four times more likely than white women to die during pregnancy or shortly after birth. Moreover, for every maternal death that occurs, an estimated 100 other women suffer severe complications of pregnancy or childbirth. We must act now to reverse this trend and save mothers' lives.

We urge the Subcommittee to address maternal mortality by supporting the work of state maternal mortality review committees (MMRCs) through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). MMRCs are multidisciplinary groups of local experts in maternal, infant, and public health that examine cases of maternal death. Maternal mortality review is a cyclical process that does not end by simply counting and characterizing deaths, but must be followed with action by putting the recommendations of the committee to work in hospitals, communities, or policies.

While these efforts take place at the state or jurisdiction level, federal support will accelerate progress toward ensuring that every state has a high-functioning MMRC. This legislation will also advance efforts among states to standardize the collection and analysis of data. With better data and information, we can develop a national understanding of why mothers are dying and what we collectively can do to reverse this tragic trend.

We look forward to continuing to work together to see this bipartisan bill move forward in Congress and enacted into law.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days

AFE Foundation

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Physicians

American College of Surgeons

American Medical Women's Association

American Psychological Association

American Public Health Association

American Society for Reproductive Medicine

APS Foundation of America, Inc.

Association for Prevention Teaching and Research

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Association of Public Health Laboratories

Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN) MCH Nutrition Council

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

Children's Defense Fund

Choices in Childbirth

Every Child By Two

Every Mother Counts

Genetic Alliance

Heroes for Moms

Lamaze International

March of Dimes

Maternal Safety Foundation

Medicines360

MomsRising

NAPHSIS

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network

National Blood Clot Alliance
National Health Law Program
National Partnership for Women & Families
National WIC Association
New York State Birth Center Association
Nurse-Family Partnership
Organization of Teratology Information Specialists
PCOS Challenge: The National Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Association
Power to Decide, the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy
Preeclampsia Foundation
Safe States Alliance
Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine
Society for Public Health Education
Spina Bifida Association
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
Trust for America's Health
United Methodist Women
ZERO TO THREE