

November 14, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:

We, the undersigned 109 national organizations committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our nation's families, commend your ongoing leadership to advance legislation to improve maternal health. As we approach the end of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, **we urge you to include language establishing permanent, nationwide 12-month postpartum Medicaid coverage in a year-end legislative package.** While the state option to extend coverage in the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L.117-2) was an important down payment, further Congressional action is needed to reduce disparities in coverage across states, eliminate racial inequities in maternal health outcomes, and end preventable maternal deaths.

The United States faces a severe – and worsening – maternal health crisis. Over 800 women died due to pregnancy or childbirth in 2020, a record high exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>i</sup> Racial disparities in maternal outcomes persist: Black and Indigenous birthing people die at 2-3 times the rate of their white counterparts.<sup>ii</sup> These rates reveal the long-standing inequities within our health care system and the racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes. Further, **research from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) based on state Maternal Mortality Review Committee data found that at least 80% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable.**<sup>iii</sup> We can and must do better to prevent maternal mortality.

Extending Medicaid coverage from the current requirement of 60-days postpartum to 12-months nationwide is critical to lowering the nation's alarming maternal mortality rate. The Medicaid program covers at least 40% of all births in the United States, a disproportionate number of which are to Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous women.<sup>iv,v</sup> In the first year postpartum, new parents can face a multitude of health challenges, including pregnancy-related complications, exacerbated chronic conditions, mental health conditions, and substance use disorders. According to the CDC, over half of pregnancy-related deaths between 2017 and 2019 occurred between one-week and one-year postpartum with nearly a third occurring after 43 days postpartum.<sup>vi</sup> Twelve months of continuous Medicaid eligibility for postpartum individuals would remove key access barriers that often prevent them from getting the care they need after birth.

We must build upon the 12-month postpartum Medicaid coverage option provided to states in the American Rescue Plan Act to ensure *all* enrollees, regardless of zip code, can access continuous care. Without Congressional action, the state option will expire in 2027. This looming deadline causes uncertainty and administrative burden to states that have taken action, and disincentivizes the remaining states to take advantage of the option as time goes on.

Thank you for your commitment to securing the health and wellbeing of our nation's families. We look forward to working with you to ensure that postpartum individuals in *every* state and territory have access to a minimum of 12-months of Medicaid coverage. Please contact Amy Haddad, Chief Government Affairs Officer for the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP), at [ahaddad@amchp.org](mailto:ahaddad@amchp.org) for more information.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days, an Initiative of FHI Solutions  
2 Degrees Foundation  
2020 Mom  
Academic Pediatric Association  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
AFE Foundation  
African American Mayors Association  
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families  
Alliance for Black NICU Families  
Alliance of Community Health Plans  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Clinical Pharmacy  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Physicians  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Heart Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
APS Foundation of America, Inc  
Association for Community Affiliated Plans  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Birthing Beautiful Communities  
Black Mamas Matter Alliance  
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Centering Healthcare Institute  
centro Pediatrico de lactancia y crianza  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
CityMatCH  
Community Catalyst  
Diversity Uplifts, Inc.  
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC)  
Every Mother Counts  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Futures Without Violence  
GLO Premies  
Guttmacher Institute  
Hand to Hold  
HealthConnect One  
Healthy Teen Network  
HealthyWomen  
Hemophilia Federation of America

Hyperemesis Education and Research Foundation  
IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA)  
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda  
Institute for Perinatal Quality Improvement  
March for Moms  
March of Dimes  
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance  
Medela LLC  
Medicaid Health Plans of America  
Mom Congress  
MomsRising  
NARAL Pro-Choice America  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Birth Equity Collaborative  
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network  
National Blood Clot Alliance  
National Blood Clot Awareness  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National Health Law Program  
National Healthy Start Association  
National Lactation Consultant Alliance  
National League for Nursing  
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Rural Health Association  
National WIC Association  
National Women's Health Network  
Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
Nurse-Family Partnership  
Organization of Teratology Information Specialists  
Parents as Teachers  
PCOS Challenge: The National Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Association  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Postpartum Pelvic Health Advocates  
Postpartum Support International  
Power to Decide  
RESULTS  
School-Based Health Alliance  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Reproductive Investigation  
Society for Women's Health Research  
Start Early  
The Joint Commission  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
The PPROM Foundation  
The Shane Foundation

U.S. Breastfeeding Committee  
United Cerebral Palsy  
What to Expect Project

CC:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
The Honorable Richard Shelby  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
The Honorable Kay Granger  
The Honorable Frank Pallone  
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
The Honorable Ron Wyden  
The Honorable Mike Crapo

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<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Maternal Mortality Rates in the United States, 2020. Accessed September 14, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2020/maternal-mortality-rates-2020.htm>.

<sup>ii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System. Accessed September 14, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/pregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm#race-ethnicity>.

<sup>iii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Data from Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 36 states, 2017-2019. Accessed September 20, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/erase-mm/data-mmrc.html#table3>.

<sup>iv</sup> Medicaid and CHIP Payment Access Commission (MACPAC). Medicaid's Role in Financing Maternity Care. Accessed September 14, 2022. <https://www.macpac.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Medicaid%E2%80%99s-Role-in-Financing-Maternity-Care.pdf>.

<sup>v</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). Medicaid Coverage for Women. Accessed September 22, 2022. <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/medicaid-coverage-for-women/>.

<sup>vi</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Data from Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 36 states, 2017-2019. Accessed September 20, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/erase-mm/data-mmrc.html#table3>.