

Mothers and Newborns Success Act

Introduced by Sen. Tim Kaine and Sen. Lisa Murkowski

There are significant racial and ethnic inequities in maternal and infant mortality rates in the U.S. According to the CDC, the [maternal mortality rate](#) for non-Hispanic Black women in 2018 is more than 2.5 times higher than the maternal mortality rate of non-Hispanic white women, and the [infant mortality rate](#) of babies born to non-Hispanic Black women is more than 2.3 times higher than the infant mortality rate of babies born to non-Hispanic white women. American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) women are [more than twice as likely](#) as non-Hispanic white women to die as a result of pregnancy or its complications, and the [infant mortality rate](#) among babies born to AI/AN women is 2.1 times higher than that of non-Hispanic white women. Any pregnant woman choosing to have a child should be able to do so safely without regard to income, race, ethnicity, employment status, or any other socio-economic factor. U.S. policy must support women's health so that women thrive and newborns have the maximum chance for life success.

The *Mothers and Newborns Success Act* aims to reduce maternal and infant mortality, ensure that all infants can grow up healthy and safe, and protect women's health before, during, and after pregnancy. The legislation supports innovation in maternal health delivery and improves data collection on maternal mortality and maternal deaths. The bill will help ensure that women are matched with birthing facilities that are risk-appropriate for their particular needs to improve maternal and neonatal care and outcomes. The legislation strengthens support for women during the critical postpartum period, the year after birth, and will help ensure pregnant women get the vaccinations they need and are aware of maternal health warning signs. The bill promotes maternal health research and the use of telehealth to help high-risk expectant mothers in geographically-isolated areas. The *Mothers and Newborns Success Act* is a significant step toward reducing racial, ethnic, and geographic inequities in maternal and infant health.

The *Mothers and Newborns Success Act* would:

- Codify the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s State Maternal Health Innovation Program and the Supporting Maternal Health Innovation Program to assist states in implementing actions to address disparities in maternal health and improve maternal health outcomes.
- Support CDC's work to classify birthing facilities based on the level of risk-appropriate maternal and neonatal care to improve care delivery and health outcomes for expectant mothers and their infants.
- Support CDC's efforts to implement quality assurance processes to improve the validity of pregnancy checkbox data from death certificates.
- Support CDC's data collection on maternal attitudes and experiences during the prepregnancy, pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postpartum periods as well as efforts to provide technical assistance to states to ensure representation of communities of color in key datasets.
- Establish a pilot program through HRSA to better support women's health in the postpartum period.
- Establish a National Maternal Health Research Network at the NIH to support innovative research to reduce maternal mortality and promote maternal health.
- Support HRSA's Rural Maternity and Obstetric Management Strategies (RMOMS) Program to improve access to, and continuity of, obstetrics care in rural communities, including thorough use of telehealth.
- Establish a public and provider awareness campaign through the CDC to promote awareness of maternal health warnings signs and the importance of vaccinations for pregnant women and children.

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