

May 13, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chairwoman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chairman Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We, the 271 undersigned national, state and local organizations, who represent and care for the health and wellbeing of our nation's mothers, babies, and families, are writing to share our concerns about the proposed President's Fiscal Year 2026 "Skinny Budget" released on May 2, 2025, which includes cuts to historically bipartisan programs that are core components in addressing our nation's high maternal mortality rate. While we share the goals of both the Administration and Congress that federal dollars should be used effectively and efficiently, we believe the proposed reductions in funding to maternal health programs would negatively impact our collective ability to care for both mothers and infants, potentially reversing years of bipartisan progress aimed at supporting the health and wellbeing of our nation's families.

Since 2000, the maternal mortality rate in the United States has been on the rise. In fact, our country has the highest rate of maternal mortality of any high-income nation: in 2022, the maternal mortality rate was 22 deaths per 100,000 live births, more than triple the rates in most developed countries.<sup>1</sup> The maternal mortality rate is even higher in rural states; for example, Alabama's maternal mortality rate is 39 deaths per 100,000 live births.<sup>2</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mental health conditions are the leading cause of maternal mortality, accounting for 23% of pregnancy-related deaths.<sup>3</sup>

The proposed elimination of the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and all its programs threatens the wellbeing of American families as it will dismantle critical programs that safeguard maternal and infant health. In particular, eliminating the [Division of Reproductive Health](#) – the office responsible for gathering, assessing, and providing data and insights that help researchers, public health experts, and state and local governments develop, test, and revise programs that save the lives of mothers and babies – would discontinue several vital programs that directly support positive maternal and infant health outcomes including:

- [Maternal Mortality Review Committees](#): These Committees identify causes of maternal deaths and make recommendations to save mothers' lives.
- [Perinatal Quality Collaboratives](#): These Collaboratives implement projects to improve infant and maternal outcomes and ensure healthier starts for newborns and their mothers.
- [Pregnancy Risk Assessment and Monitoring System](#): This system helps improve infant health by addressing the behaviors and actions of mothers before, during, and immediately after childbirth.

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<sup>1</sup> Gunja, Manira et al. The Commonwealth Fund. *Insights Into the U.S. Maternal Mortality Crisis: An International Comparison*. June 4, 2024. [LINK](#)

<sup>2</sup> March of Dimes Peristats. Mortality and Morbidity. Data for Alabama. February 2024. [LINK](#)

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Data From Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 38 U.S. States 2020*. May 28, 2024. [LINK](#)

- [Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System](#): This system gathers high-level maternal mortality data that can help protect vulnerable mothers and babies through early identification of health risks.
- [HEAR HER Campaign](#): This public awareness campaign empowers families to recognize and respond to warning signs during and following pregnancy to save mothers' lives.
- [Safe to Sleep Campaign](#): This public awareness campaign has helped reduce infant mortality rates nationwide.
- [Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Sudden Death in the Young Case Registry](#): This resource helps researchers and medical professionals prevent infant deaths by gathering, analyzing, and sharing the data needed to develop strategies and interventions.

Without these programs, healthcare providers, public health officials, and policymakers would lose access to vital information needed to protect mothers and babies, potentially reversing decades of progress in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates.

In particular, [maternal mortality review committees](#) (MMRCs) serve as the nation's frontline defense in identifying the causes of maternal deaths and are essential in developing and implementing evidence-based, well-supported, proven programs to reduce maternal mortality. MMRCs are state- and territory-based multidisciplinary expert teams that conduct a comprehensive review of all deaths that occur during pregnancy or within one year following childbirth, determine if those deaths were preventable, and recommend strategies to prevent maternal deaths in the future. MMRCs have access to a wide range of data and information – such as medical records, police reports, social services information, and interviews with family members – that enable committee members to develop a robust understanding of factors that contribute to maternal deaths. For example, MMRCs have identified that mental health and substance use disorder conditions are the leading cause of maternal mortality. These types of findings from MMRCs enable healthcare providers and policymakers to implement targeted and cost-effective interventions that protect mothers and preserve families.

The ERASE MM program ([Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality \(ERASE MM\)](#)) stands as a testament to successful bipartisan collaboration: it was established through the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act (P.L. 115-344), which was signed into law by President Trump in 2018. ERASE MM serves two critical functions that deliver measurable returns on investment: (1) Supporting state-led MMRCs and (2) Coordinating safety initiatives that help states prevent deaths and reduce healthcare costs. Given its proven effectiveness, the ERASE MM program has overwhelming bipartisan support and has received consistent federal funding for many years. Discontinuing funding for ERASE MM and MMRCs would halt vital data-collection and analysis about maternal deaths that guide evidence-based policy and programmatic decisions, thereby eroding states' abilities to prevent maternal deaths in their communities and potentially increasing long-term healthcare costs through preventable complications.

Cutting evidence-based maternal health programs and services that deliver measurable results to address maternal mortality will undo decades of progress, likely cause higher health care costs, and possibly lead to an increase in the number of preventable maternal deaths. Thus we urge prioritizing long-term investment in the health and wellbeing of our nation's families by thoughtfully funding critical proven programs and public health initiatives that support mothers and infants.

While improving government effectiveness and efficiency is essential, protecting vulnerable mothers and their infants is both a moral imperative and a fiscally responsible investment in our nation's families.

We remain committed to working across party lines to ensure every family has the opportunity for a healthy start – a goal that transcends political divisions and reflects our shared American values.

Sincerely,

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance  
A Better Balance  
Aaliyah in Action  
Academy of Certified Educators and Doulas  
Alliance for a Healthy Kansas  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Pediatrics - Kansas Chapter  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Mental Health Counselors Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
Anchor Perinatal Wellness  
Anchored Life Academy  
AngelEye Health, Inc.  
Arbit Counseling  
Arizona Perinatal Psychiatry Access Line- APAL  
Arkansas Maternal Coalition  
Baby Blues Connection  
Bay State Birth Coalition  
BB-Penda, Inc., Baltimore Birthing Project  
Be Seen Wellness  
Behavioral Wellness for Women  
Beth Bishop Psychotherapy, LLC  
Beyond the Baby Blues  
Bipartisan Leaders Optimizing Outcomes for Maternal Health (BLOOM) Coalition  
Birthing the Magic Collaborative  
BirthWise Doula Services LLC  
Black Maternal Health Federal Policy Collective  
Broken Wheel Ministries  
BSEB-Birth Support, Education & Beyond  
Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, Inc  
Candlelit Care  
Caribbean Women's Health Association, Inc.  
Caring Essentials Collaborative, LLC  
Center for Black Maternal Health and Reproductive Justice, Tufts University School of Medicine  
Center for Law and Social Policy  
Center for Postpartum Family Health  
Centerstone  
Central Carolina Doulas  
Central Florida Psychological Consultants, Inc  
Chamber of Mothers  
Chamber of Mothers, Boston Chapter  
Chamber of Mothers, Chicago Chapter

Cherished Mom  
Cincinnati Postpartum  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative  
Commission on the Public's Health System  
Community Day Care Center, Inc.  
Concert Health  
Courageous Steps  
Dionysus Digital Health Inc  
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC)  
DONA International  
Doula Latinas International  
Dowa  
Duluth Perinatal, PLLC  
Early Edge California  
Elias Psychological Services  
Empower Perinatal  
Equip4Impact  
EveryMom Chicago  
Fair Haven Community Health Care  
Families USA  
Family Centered Services of Connecticut  
Family-Centered Care Taskforce  
FamilyWell  
FASD United  
Fertility Institute of New Orleans  
Flagstaff Doula- Arizona  
Florida Community Health Worker Coalition  
Flourish Counseling + Consulting  
FLRRiSH Inc  
Frische Psychiatry  
Futures Without Violence  
Get Pregnancy Ready, LLC  
Girls for Gender Equity  
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice  
Gold Coast Doula  
Grace Leadership Foundation Inc  
Grove Emotional Health Collaborative  
Guttmacher Institute  
H.E.R. Institute  
Halifax Health  
Happy Thoughts Mental Health  
Hart Counseling  
Hawthorn Therapy and Consulting, LLC

Head Heart Therapy  
Healing with Wisdom  
Healthy Families America  
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies - The Montana Coalition  
HealthyWomen  
Heart and Hands Midwifery and Family Healthcare  
Hennepin Healthcare System  
Hope for HIE  
ICU Baby  
IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA)  
In Due Time Coalition  
Ingram Screening, LLC  
Joyful Thoughts, LLC  
Just Solutions  
Kansas Action for Children  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Klick Health  
Legal Action Center  
Legal Momentum, The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Let Mommy Sleep  
Leva  
Lifeline for Families Center and Lifeline for Moms Program at UMass Chan Medical School  
Limina Counseling  
Little Love Doula Services  
Lovewell Therapy LLC  
Luminous Mental Health  
MA Chapter of the National Association for Certified Professional Midwives  
Maine Medical Association  
Mala Mantis Counseling, LLC  
Mama2Mama  
Mammissi Birth Services  
Mapping Matrescence  
March of Dimes  
Maritz Family Foundation  
Massachusetts PPD Fund  
Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Program (MCPAP) for Moms  
Maternal and Child Health Access  
Mavida Health  
Mental Health America of Ohio  
Michigan Breastfeeding Network  
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Milk It Lactation Services LLC  
Mindful-Well CDC

Moms In The Muck Inc.  
Moms Mental Health Initiative, Inc.  
MomsBloom  
MomsRising  
Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity  
Mystic Valley action For Reproductive Justice  
National Birth Equity Collaborative  
National Black Breastfeeding Caucus  
National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health  
National Coalition for Infant Health  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Health Law Program  
National Institute for Children's Health Quality  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Perinatal Association  
Nebraska Methodist Health System  
Neuroelectrics  
New Mexico Department of Health  
New Moms  
New Orleans Health Department  
NHMH - No Health without Mental Health  
Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center  
NICU Parent Network  
North Shore Postpartum HELP  
Nurture Mental Health  
Office of African American Affairs  
Ohana Behavioral Health  
Ohana Center  
Oshun Family Center  
Our Bodies Ourselves  
Palmer Perinatal & Women's Wellness, PLLC  
Partum Health  
Pear Maternal Mind & Body  
Perigee Fund  
Perinatal Support Washington  
Pike County Board of DD  
Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts  
Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health  
Postpartum Resource Center of New York  
Postpartum Support Center  
Postpartum Support International  
Postpartum Support International - Arizona Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - California Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Colorado Chapter

Postpartum Support International - Florida Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Georgia Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Hawai'i Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Indiana Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Iowa Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Kansas Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Louisiana Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Massachusetts Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Michigan Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Missouri Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - New Jersey Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - New Mexico Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - North Carolina Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - North Dakota Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Pennsylvania Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Texas Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - Washington, DC Chapter  
Postpartum Support International - West Virginia  
Postpartum Support International - Utah Chapter  
Postpartum Support Virginia  
Premieworld Foundation  
Pregnancy & Postpartum Support MN  
Primary Care Development Corporation  
Protect Our Care  
PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy  
Radiating Joy Mental Health Services  
Rebuilding Independence My Style  
Reclaim Black Motherhood LLC  
Relate Psychological Services  
Renewed Strength Counseling Services  
Repro Psych Trainees  
Return to Zero: Hope  
Rhia Ventures  
Riverside Community Care  
Roots on the Road Maternal and Women's Mental Health  
Rowen Specialty Clinic  
Safe Mind Space Counseling Group, LLC  
SAGA Farms  
Saul's Light  
Save Texas Moms  
Schroeder Mental Health Services  
Seattle Therapy  
Seven Starling  
Shades of Blue Project

Shades of You Shades of Me  
SHIELDS for Families  
Shriver Center on Poverty Law  
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change  
Sisterhood Wellness  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Solution-Focused Therapy Services, LLC  
South Jersey Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association  
Steady Hope, LLC  
STORC  
Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT)  
Sundance Adult Day Program  
Swaying Saguaro Doula Services  
The 2 Degrees Foundation  
The Body Collaborative, PLLC  
The Boston Foundation  
The Colette Louise Tisdahl Foundation  
The Connecticut Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Coalition  
The Foundation For Delaware County  
The Incubator Podcast  
The Lilith Center for Women  
The Motherhood Center  
The Tiny Miracles Foundation  
ThriveCulture Coaching  
Through to Thrive  
TogetherWell LLC  
UltraViolet  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United States Breastfeeding Committee  
Well Mind Perinatal  
Wellness in Bloom Counseling, LLC  
What to Expect Project  
Wheeler Clinic  
Wholesome Hearts Doula Services  
Wholymom LLC  
Wild Lavender Counseling  
Wildflower Health  
Will County Health Department  
Womb Wisdom Wellness LLC  
Women and Children: Counseling, Consulting & Educating LLC  
Women of Reform Judaism  
Women's Health Advocates  
Woosa Doula  
WorkLife Law

Yale School of Nursing  
Yale University/Yale School of Medicine  
YANAM2M  
Yet Marriage and Family Therapy  
Your Village Journey LLC  
Zero Overdose  
ZERO TO THREE