



August 29, 2018

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi
United States House of Representatives
515 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler
United States House of Representatives
1107 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Krishnamoorthi and Beutler:

On behalf of the March of Dimes, a unique collaboration of scientists, clinicians, parents, members of the business community, and other volunteers representing every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, I would like to express our support for H.R. 5761, the Ending Maternal Mortality Act of 2018.

Tragically, the United States fares worse than the vast majority of developed nations in preventing pregnancy-related deaths. In the U.S., an estimated 700 women die each year from pregnancy-related or associated complications and an additional 50,000 suffer from severe maternal morbidity. Black women are three to four times more likely to die of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth such as preeclampsia/eclampsia, obstetric hemorrhage, infection, and suicide and drug overdose, compared to white women. This racial disparity in maternal mortality has both persisted and widened over time. Studies estimate that approximately 60 percent of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable and over half of maternal injuries could be reduced or eliminated with better care and enhanced maternal quality improvement and safety initiatives.

H.R. 5761, the Ending Maternal Mortality Act of 2018, would address these concerns by requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to publish on a biennial basis a national plan to reduce preventable maternal mortality, with the goal of cutting the rate in half over the next decade. The plan would address issues surrounding public awareness, identifying at-risk populations and eliminating disparities, and improving quality of care. This plan would bring a much-needed focus to maternal mortality across the government and ensure that prevention efforts are appropriately coordinated and aligned.

The March of Dimes is proud to support H.R. 5761, and we look forward to working with you to improve the health and well-being of women, children, and families. If we can provide more information, please contact Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Government Affairs Cynthia Pellegrini at cpellegrini@marchofdimes.org or 202/659-1800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacey D. Stewart'.

Stacey D. Stewart
President