

SUPPORT

#BLANKETCHANGE

PREVENT WOMEN FROM DYING FROM PREGNANCY-RELATED CAUSES.

The U.S. has the highest rate of maternal mortality in the developed world, with over 700 women dying each year and over 50,000 suffering severe complications during pregnancy. In 2018, Congress took an important first step toward #BlanketChange by passing legislation to help states investigate the death of pregnant women and new mothers and make recommendation on how prevent future deaths, but much more needs to be done. [Read testimony](#) from March of Dimes President Stacey D. Stewart to learn more about preventing maternal mortality.

Numerous bills have been introduced in Congress to prevent the tragic and preventable death of mothers during and after childbirth:

The MOMMAs Act would promote hospitals' adoption of safety best practices for childbirth, extend postpartum coverage of women under Medicaid and CHIP, and **establish regional centers of excellence for implicit bias training**

The Maternal CARE Act would promote maternity care medical homes and fund implicit bias training for health care providers

The Ending Maternal Mortality Act would require the federal government to develop a plan to reduce maternal mortality by 50% over 10 years

S. 116, the Modernizing Obstetric Medicine Standards (MOMS) Act would advance hospitals' adoption of safety best practices for childbirth and improve data collection

The Maximizing Outcomes for Moms through Medicaid Improvement and Enhancement of Services (MOMMIES) Act would extend postpartum coverage to one year for women under Medicaid and CHIP, establish a Maternity Care Home Demonstration project for states, require a federal report on increasing access to doula care, and require a GAO report on states' use of telemedicine to increase access to maternity care.

REQUIRE ALL HEALTH PLANS TO COVER PEOPLE WITH PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS.

All people need health insurance, especially if they have a pre-existing condition. The Affordable Care Act requires all plans to offer coverage to all individuals without discriminating them based on their health status.

But guaranteeing that people can get a health plan is only the first step. That insurance also needs to be affordable and cover the benefits they need. To date, none of the proposals offered in Congress include all three of those protections. Without all three, repealing the Affordable Care Act will leave some moms and babies out in the cold. [Read testimony](#) from March of Dimes Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rahul Gupta to learn more.

REQUIRE ALL HEALTH PLANS TO COVER MATERNITY AND NEWBORN CARE.

Every health plan should cover maternity and newborn care, including prenatal care, labor and delivery, and hospital care for mom and baby. Prior to passage of the Affordable Care Act, only 13% of plans offered in the individual insurance market included any coverage for maternity care. Insurance coverage is essential to ensuring that both mom and baby can get everything they need to be healthy.

Some policymakers have suggested that women shouldn't have to carry insurance with maternity care if they don't plan to get pregnant. Given that about 50% of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned, it's vital that all plans cover maternity care—even for people who don't expect to need it. [Learn more here](#) and hear about why everyone needs maternity coverage (men too!)

ENSURE NEW MOMS DON'T HAVE TO TRADE MATERNAL HEALTH BENEFITS THEY NEED TO AFFORD HEALTH COVERAGE.

The Affordable Care Act banned annual and lifetime caps on health coverage, limited out-of-pocket costs, and included provisions designed to make premiums more affordable. None of the alternative proposals voted on by Congress in recent years contained strong protections against high costs for consumers.

Short term plans and association health plans can charge lower premiums because they are allowed to offer fewer benefits and consumer protections. These plans can refuse to cover whole categories of care, like maternity and newborn care. They can also impose annual or lifetime caps on benefits, which can rapidly be reached by a family with a baby born preterm who needs weeks of hospital care.

PREVENT AND TREAT PRETERM BIRTH AND ENSURE EVERY BABY IS BORN HEALTHY.

Too many babies are born too soon or too sick in the United States. One in every 10 babies is born preterm, and some need to stay in the hospital for weeks or months. Every 15 minutes, a baby is born suffering from opioid withdrawal. Birth defects affect 1 in every 33 babies and are a leading cause of infant deaths. In 2018, Congress made progress toward #BlanketChange by passing the PREEMIE Act, the only federal law that supports research and services for babies born preterm and their families. Policymakers should support a wide range of policies to research, prevent and treat these and other issues so every infant can be born with the best possible start in life.

EVEN ONE BABY LOSING ITS MOM IS TOO MANY. BUT IF WE ALL WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE SURE THAT EVERY BABY HAS A BETTER CHANCE TO GROW UP WITH A MOM.