Pregnancy-related death has more than doubled over the last 30 years. Moms in the U.S. die at the highest rate in the developed world, about 800 each year, with two-thirds considered to be preventable. Postpartum care is important because new moms are at risk of serious and sometimes life-threatening health complications. It is also vital for moms who experienced loss at birth. A lapse in insurance coverage can mean these women are sicker when they regain coverage.

Access to postpartum care not only saves lives, but also leads to better long-term health outcomes for both moms and babies.

In 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act gave states a new option to use state plan amendments to extend Medicaid postpartum coverage from 60 days to 12 months. Currently, only a third of states and DC have extended Medicaid’s postpartum benefits. This leaves nearly a half million moms annually lacking this vital benefit. We need to ensure that all moms are covered by Medicaid for a full year postpartum and that it is a permanent mandatory benefit.

There was a 14.2 percent increase in maternal deaths from 2019-2020.

March of Dimes’ Maternity Care Desert Report showed that 7 million women of childbearing age live in counties without access or with limited access to maternity care. These women are giving birth to more than 500,000 babies a year.

Medicaid covers 42% of all births in the nation.

One in five women are affected by anxiety, depression and other maternal mental health conditions during and the year following pregnancy. Black moms suffer most often from maternal mental health conditions.

Nearly one-third of women experience changes to or loss of insurance coverage in the postpartum period.

The crisis is most severe for Black moms who are 3x more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than White women and are at higher risk of giving birth to pre-term babies.

Women of color and women who live in poverty are disproportionately impacted by maternal mental health conditions, experiencing them at rates 2-3 times higher than White women.
The Mothers and Offspring Mortality and Morbidity Awareness Act will extend postpartum eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP to one year from 60 days and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children for two years.

It will also expand pregnant and postpartum Medicaid and CHIP benefits to include oral health coverage.

Additionally, the CDC will consult with HRSA to provide technical assistance and advance practices in data collection, reporting standardization, and maternal mortality prevention. The bill authorizes state-level CDC grant funding toward care improvement collaborations prior to and after birthing to improve health outcomes for the mothers and infants. It also approves a HRSA initiative to increase the quality and safety of maternity care.

Lastly, it requires the HHS must educate healthcare providers about implicit bias and cultural competency.

Key approaches to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity:

- Increase Medicaid coverage to one-year post-partum
- Expand access to culturally competent health care
- Standardize information collection and reporting

**Senate Sponsors**

**Lead sponsor:**
Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)

**Co-sponsors:** 10 current; including 9 original

**House Sponsors**

**Lead sponsor:**
Rep. Robin L. Kelly (D-IL-2)

**Co-sponsors:** 63 current; including 25 original