



# Moms MATTER Act

H.R. 6143

## BACKGROUND

According to maternal mortality review committees (MMRCs) that examine pregnancy-related deaths in their respective states, “mental health conditions are one of the leading causes of pregnancy-related death.”<sup>1</sup> MMRCs have also been assessing substance use disorder as a contributing factor in maternal deaths, recognizing the overall national trend of drug overdose deaths *tripling* from 1999-2014.<sup>2</sup>

These challenges are most acute for low-income and minority families: according to the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), more than half of poor infants live with a mother who has some level of depressive symptoms.<sup>3</sup> Research from the Center for American Progress found that maternal mental health issues among Black women “are largely underreported and symptoms often go unaddressed.”<sup>4</sup>

The **Moms MATTER Act** will address critical maternal mental and behavioral health care issues, including substance use disorders, with a particular focus on minority women. The bill also promotes innovative programs that have already developed a strong evidence base in improving outcomes for women throughout their pregnancies and up to one year postpartum.

## BILL SUMMARY

The **Moms MATTER Act** will:

1. Establish a **Maternal Mental and Behavioral Health Task Force** to improve mental and behavioral health outcomes for women throughout pregnancy and up to one year postpartum.
2. Establish **grant programs to promote innovative approaches to improving maternal health outcomes** with a particular focus on maternal mental health and substance use disorder for minority women, including:
  - Group prenatal and postpartum care models
  - Collaborative maternity care models
  - Clinics offering wraparound services to women with substance use disorders
  - Programs at freestanding birth centers
  - Programs such as phone hotlines to connect maternity care providers with mental and behavioral health specialists.

<sup>1</sup> CDC Foundation: [Report from Nine Maternal Mortality Review Committees](#)

<sup>2</sup> CDC Foundation: [Report from Nine Maternal Mortality Review Committees](#)

<sup>3</sup> CLASP: [Maternal Depression and Young Adult Mental Health](#)

<sup>4</sup> Center for American Progress: [Exploring African American' High Maternal and Infant Death Rates](#)

## COSPONSORS

The **Moms MATTER Act** is led by Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy, III. The bill is cosponsored by Representatives Lauren Underwood, John Katko, Billy Long, Alma S. Adams, and Mary Gay Scanlon.

## ENDORSEMENTS

The **Moms MATTER Act** is endorsed by more than 50 organizations, including the:

- Black Mamas Matter Alliance
- Center for Reproductive Rights
- American Psychological Association
- Mental Health America
- Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
- NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
- National Birth Equity Collaborative
- Ancient Song Doula Services
- Mamatoto Village Inc
- National Perinatal Task Force
- Commonsense Childbirth
- Every Mother Counts
- 1,000 Days
- First Focus Campaign for Children
- Black Women's Health Imperative
- American Public Health Association
- MomsRising
- National WIC Association
- Families USA
- National Association of Certified Professional Midwives
- America's Essential Hospitals
- American Association of Birth Centers
- National Partnership for Women & Families
- American College of Physicians
- Mom Congress
- American College of Nurse-Midwives
- EverThrive Illinois
- National Health Law Program
- HealthConnect One
- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- Society for Public Health Education
- Community Catalyst
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and more.

## CONTACT

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