MAMAGENDA FOR #BLANKETCHANGE

MARCH OF DIMES

LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICYMAKERS MUST TAKE ACTION AND ENACT POLICY INITIATIVES FOCUSED ON:

1. EQUITY

WE MUST ELIMINATE RACIAL AND ETHNIC HEALTH DISPARITIES BY FOCUSING ON PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH TO IMPROVE BIRTH OUTCOMES.

Black and Native American women are three times more likely than White women to die from pregnancy-related causes nationwide. The rate of serious complications and preterm births are disproportionately greater for moms and babies of color. There are several critical reforms states and Congress need to enact:
- Investing in cultural competency and implicit bias training for health care professionals, and declaring structural racism a public health emergency;
- Establishing risk-appropriate levels of maternal and neonatal care, and ensuring proper access to maternity care for all women;
- Investing in programs that provide low-income moms prenatal care, safe and affordable housing, access to nutritious food and enhance access to reliable and safe public transportation;
- The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021 (H.R. 959/S. 346) and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (H.R. 1065/S.1486) will help prevent racial and ethnic discrimination in maternal care, improve perinatal care and health outcomes and protect expecting moms by ensuring safe workplaces.

2. ACCESS

WE MUST IMPROVE UNEQUAL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO THE MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH CRISIS.

Millions of women face barriers to maternal health care. Seven million women of childbearing age live in counties with limited or no access to maternity care and millions will lose their health insurance shortly after giving birth. The year after a mom gives birth is a critical time period, but many women face gaps in insurance coverage.

Congress and states can improve access to care for all moms and babies through enacting key reforms:
- Adopt permanent Medicaid postpartum extension to 12 months as authorized under the American Rescue Plan, and add reimbursement for maternal doula care for expecting women;
- Expand the practice authority of Certified Nurse Midwives;
- Work to close the digital divide and expand access to effective telehealth;
- Enact the Into the Light Act for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Act (S. 3824/H.R. 7073) and TRIUMPH for New Moms Act (S. 2779/H.R. 4217) to provide needed support programs for families who experience maternal mental health conditions.

WE MUST EXPAND RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION ON MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY TO ADDRESS PREVENTABLE HEALTH CONDITIONS.

Our national comprehensive childhood vaccination program and newborn screening program are the backbone of the public health advances we've made as a nation. Newborn screening prevents 12,000 infants yearly from dying or experiencing complications leading to permanent intellectual and physical disabilities. Childhood vaccinations have saved thousands of lives from preventable formerly endemic childhood diseases. Preserving these successful programs is vital and clear action is needed from Congress and states:

- Enact the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2021 (H.R. 482/S.350), which reauthorizes through FY2026 and sustains several screening programs and activities that impact certain conditions and genetic, endocrine and metabolic diseases;
- Modernize newborn screening programs to ensure reliable funding and that newborns are screened for all conditions identified on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel;
- Support families in catching up on overdue vaccination caused by the pandemic and ensuring adults are fully vaccinated as well;
- Continue to support Maternal Mortality Review Committees (MMRCs) and improve maternal and infant health data collection to ensure improvements to quality of care and health outcomes, including preventable pregnancy-related deaths.

WE MUST COME TOGETHER TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE NEEDLESS DEATHS OF MOMS AND BABIES IN AMERICA. PLEDGE YOUR SUPPORT NOW.

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