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Rep. Alma Adams Urges Adoption of the Kira Johnson Act

Alma Adams Press [sam.spencer@mail.house.gov]

Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 4:17 PM

To: Steve Johnston



Rep. Alma Adams Urges Adoption of the Kira Johnson Act

"No woman or family should have to experience what Kira went through."

Washington – Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12) introduced the Kira Johnson Act as part of the Black Maternal Omnibus of 2020, a package of bills addressing the maternal health crisis. Today, on the last day of Black Maternal Health Week, she is urging her colleagues in the House to pass this legislation.

"During Black Maternal Health Week, I'm highlighting an important bill in the Omnibus: the Kira Johnson Act (H.R. 6144). The bill invests in reducing maternal mortality and morbidity rates overall, and especially for Black women," **said Representative Adams, co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.** "Kira is one of the many moms who we lost too soon. A mistake made during her delivery went unaddressed for several hours and ultimately cost her her life. This story hits close to home because it is so common in our community; so common, in fact, that I almost lost my daughter after she gave birth because her doctors wouldn't listen."

"Kira Johnson mattered, and so do all of the Black moms who are four times more likely to die in childbirth," **continued Adams.** "Black moms matter, and we need every Member of Congress to stand up and join us in saying so."

Kira's story is heartbreaking ([video](#), [graphic](#)), and Rep. Adams believes no woman should have to experience what Kira went through. In an [hour-long interview about Black Maternal Health](#) on WFAE's Charlotte Talks, Congresswoman Adams described how close her own daughter came to having a maternal health crisis, and how important it is to fight for legislation that recognizes that Black moms matter.

The bill's original co-sponsors in the House include **Rep. Lauren Underwood (IL-14), co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus**, Rep. Terri Sewell (AL-07), Rep. Elenaor Holmes Norton (DC-AL), Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, (PA-05), Rep. Gwen Moore (WI-04), Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay (MO-01), Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-07), Rep. Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), Rep. Al Lawson, Jr. (FL-05), Rep. Karen Bass (CA-37). The entire Omnibus is led in the Senate by **Senator Kamala Harris (CA).**

"The potential ramifications that could come with giving birth during the coronavirus pandemic — specifically a pandemic that is disproportionately impacting African Americans — is of particular concern to Black women who were already facing a maternal health crisis in our country," **said Senator Kamala Harris.** "Now more than ever, we need to address this issue. During Black Maternal Health Week, we must continue in the fight to ensure Black women are taken seriously when they speak about their health concerns, and remove disparities and implicit bias from our health care system."

Adams co-founded the Black Maternal Health Caucus in 2019 and co-led the introduction of the Black Maternal Health Omnibus Act of 2020 in March. Over 2000 people, including Senators Cory Booker and Kamala Harris and Rep. Underwood, participated in her Women's Symposium on Black Maternal Health During COVID-19, held yesterday on Zoom ([video](#)).

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Sam Spencer
Deputy Chief of Staff | Communications Director
Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, NC-12
2436 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-1510 Fax: 202-225-1512

Connect with us




Office of Congresswoman Alma Adams | 801 E. Morehead St, Suite 150, Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-344-9950

[Unsubscribe sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

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