

Adams Announces MOMS Act and Maternal CARE Act to Conclude Black Maternal Health Week



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The bills address disproportionate rate of maternal deaths among Black women and help eliminate racial bias in maternity care and childbirth

Washington, D.C. – Today, on the last day of Black Maternal Health Week 2021, **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12), Co-Chair and Co-Founder of the Congressional Black Maternal Health Caucus**, announced two vital pieces of legislation to address the Black maternal health crisis: The ***Modernizing Obstetric Medicine Standards (MOMS) Act*** and the ***Maternal Care Access and Reducing Emergencies (CARE) Act***. **Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)** is the Senate lead of both bills.

The ***MOMS Act*** would expand the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) program, which develops standardized maternal safety best practices to prevent maternal mortality and morbidity, and would establish a new grant program to provide states and hospitals with the resources and training needed to implement the best practices to prevent maternal death and complications before, during, and after childbirth.

Adams also announced the ***Maternal CARE Act***, which would support states in their work to end preventable morbidity and mortality in maternity care by creating two new grants programs. The first is a competitive grant program for schools educating the health workforce to create training programs to address implicit bias in the health care system, in particular the areas of obstetrics and gynecology. The

second establishes funding for a demonstration project to assist up to 10 states with implementing and sustaining pregnancy medical home (PMH) programs to incentivize maternal health care providers to deliver integrated health care services to pregnant women and new mothers with the aim of reducing maternal deaths and racial health disparities. The PMG program in North Carolina is a successful initiative in the state helping to connect pregnant women, especially low-income or high-risk, to care managers to make births safer.

Fact sheets describing each bill are available here:

[***Modernizing Obstetric Medicine Standards \(MOMS\) Act***](#)

[***Maternal Care Access and Reducing Emergencies \(CARE\) Act***](#)

"Our nation's health system is failing Black mothers and their children. The maternal mortality epidemic in our community has reached crisis levels and continues to deprive communities of mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, and leaders," **said Congresswoman Adams**. "As long as mothers of color continue to suffer from disproportionate rates of mortality and morbidity compared to their white counterparts, the Maternal CARE Act and MOMS Act will help save lives. Women of color continue to suffer from implicit bias, a lack of adequate health care services, and disparate access to culturally competent maternal health education. This bill will provide guidance for Black women in maternal health and work to ensure that all women have access to high quality care. I am proud to introduce this bill during Black Maternal Health Week because Black mamas can't wait."

"Black mothers in the United States are facing a public health crisis due to deep systemic racial inequities and Congress has a moral responsibility to act," **said Senator Gillibrand**. "Childbirth should be safe for all, but for too many Black mothers navigating prenatal and postpartum care, keeping themselves and their infants safe is a gamble. I am proud to introduce the MOMS Act and the Maternal CARE Act, which will help our nation finally begin to heal these preventable tragedies with quality, evidence-based care to protect Black mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and on their postpartum journeys."

"The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is proud to

endorse the reintroduction of the ***MOMS Act*** and the ***Maternal CARE Act***—two critical bills that will advance health equity and improve the quality of maternal health care for birthing people nationwide," **said ACOG CEO Maureen G. Phipps, MD, MPH, FACOG.** "The rise in preventable U.S. maternal deaths is a multifactorial problem that will require a variety of thoughtful solutions. By authorizing the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health, the ***MOMS Act*** would help promote the adoption by hospitals and health systems of standardized best practices for treating life-threatening, pregnancy-related conditions such as hemorrhage to help ensure safe care for every U.S. birth. Additionally, the ***Maternal CARE Act***, will provide funding for implicit bias training to help address issues related to racism in the delivery of care, while also testing innovative ways to provide integrated health care services to pregnant individuals through pregnancy medical homes. These efforts will go a long way in addressing the maternal mortality crisis in this country. ACOG encourages the Senate to advance this legislation and thanks Rep. Adams and Sen. Gillibrand for their leadership in ensuring that the health of pregnant people—and particularly pregnant people of color—remains a top priority."

"As an organization whose mission is to create solutions that optimize Black maternal and infant health, the National Birth Equity Collaborative applauds Rep. Adams' and Senator Gillibrand's reintroduction of the ***MOMS Act*** and the ***Maternal CARE Act***, which overlaps with Black Maternal Health Week— a celebratory time intended to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health in the U.S. We uplift these incredibly strong, transformative pieces of legislation that will require the Department of Health and Human Services to award grants to health-professional training programs for training that addresses implicit bias and, even more, create grant programs to help states and hospitals implement maternal safety best practices. As these bills move through Congress, it is our hope that the Administration will respond to the ask of the Congresswoman and others to establish a White House Office of Sexual Reproductive Health and Wellbeing to ensure a permanent infrastructure that would undergird these bills once signed into law," **said Dr. Joia Crear Perry, Founder & President, National Birth Equity Collaborative**

The United States continues to have the highest rate of maternal mortality in the developed world, driven in large part by the high mortality rates among Black mothers. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the U.S. about 700 women die each year due to a complication before, during and after childbirth. These issues disproportionately impact Black women, who are two to three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women. Despite the high number of pregnancy and childbirth complications, CDC studies have found that two out of three of all reported deaths were preventable.

Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. is serving her fourth full term in Congress. She represents the 12th District of North Carolina, which includes parts of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. In 2018, she introduced the first Black Maternal Health Week resolution with then-Senator **Kamala Harris**. In 2019, she co-founded the Black Maternal Health Caucus with **Rep. Lauren Underwood (IL-14)**. In March 2020, Adams, along with Harris and Underwood, introduced the ***Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act*** for the first time, and in February 2021 reintroduced an expanded version of the package with **Senator Cory Booker**. Adams is a mother of two and a grandmother of four.

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