

Adams & Underwood Celebrate Passage of First Momnibus Bill in the House



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Co-Chairs and Co-Founders of Black Maternal Health Caucus Adams & Underwood Celebrate Passage of First Bill in the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act in the House of Representatives

The Protecting Moms Who Served Act seeks to eliminate maternal mortality, morbidity, and disparities among veterans

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, Black Maternal Health Caucus Co-Founders and Co-Chairs **Congresswomen Alma Adams (NC-12) and Lauren Underwood (IL-14)** celebrated the passage of the first bill in the ***Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act*** in the House of Representatives. The ***Protecting Moms Who Served Act (H.R. 958)***, led by Underwood, seeks to eliminate maternal mortality, morbidity, and disparities among veterans and passed the House with unanimous bipartisan support.

“I’m pleased to join with Congresswoman Lauren Underwood in celebrating this important step in advancing the *Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act*. Today, the *Protecting Moms Who Served Act* is the first - but certainly not the last - bill from our historic Momnibus package to pass the House,” **said Congresswoman Adams**. “As the co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, as well as a lead sponsor of the Momnibus, I am proud to see progress towards ending maternal mortality and disparities among veterans. Not only do they make a tremendous sacrifice to serve our Nation, our pregnant and postpartum veterans face unique maternal health risks that deserve our attention. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to pass this bill now and call on Congress to take action on the rest of the Momnibus to ensure all moms and babies have what they need to survive and thrive.”

“The U.S. suffers unacceptable rates of preventable maternal mortality, and veterans are uniquely at-risk. With the *Protecting Moms Who Served Act*, we can make sure that the Department of Veterans Affairs provides the highest quality maternal health care and support for moms who have served, **said Rep. Underwood**. “This is a monumental step forward in addressing our nation’s maternal health crisis, but we cannot stop here. I thank my colleagues in Congress for supporting the passage of this bipartisan effort to save moms’ lives, and I look forward to working with them to see each bill of the Momnibus passed in the House and Senate and signed into law.”

The ***Protecting Moms Who Served Act*** would codify and strengthen the Department of Veterans Affairs maternity care coordination programs to ensure veterans receive the high-quality maternal health care and support they have earned. Additionally, the bill would commission the first-ever comprehensive study of the scope of America’s maternal health crisis among women veterans, with a particular focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes. The bipartisan Senate version of the legislation is led by **Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)**. The legislation now heads to the Senate for consideration.

The **Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act** was **reintroduced** in February by Adams, Underwood, and **Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)**. The Momnibus builds on existing maternal health legislation with 12 bills to comprehensively address the clinical and non-clinical drivers of the maternal health crisis in the United States. The Momnibus makes critical investments in addressing social determinants of health, funding community-based organizations, growing and diversifying the perinatal workforce, and improving data collection processes. The Momnibus also includes new legislation to address the impacts of COVID-19 and climate change on maternal and infant health outcomes.

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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