

Build Back Better: Adams Applauds Major Victories for Maternal Health



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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12), co-founder and Co-Chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, applauded today's announcement from The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that an estimated 8,700 postpartum New Jerseyans will be guaranteed to maintain their Medicaid coverage for 12 months after the end of the pregnancy. This important step will help New Jersey to provide pregnancy-related care with the goal of preventing unnecessary postpartum-related illness and death.

Today's announcement is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to address the nation's crisis in pregnancy-related deaths and to improve the health outcomes among underserved communities through access to critical care. The announcement comes on the heels of two major victories for maternal health: [the passage of the state-level California Momnibus Act](#), which was signed into law earlier this month; and the [inclusion of critical investments in maternal health](#) in today's Build Back Better framework. Both the *California Momnibus* and the *Build Back Better Act's* maternal health provisions were inspired by the **Black Maternal Health Momnibus**, a package of bills introduced by Congresswomen Adams and **Lauren Underwood (IL-14)**.

"I'm overjoyed to hear that more moms will be covered by Medicaid, because we know Medicaid expansion is a critical part of solving our country's maternal health crisis," **said Rep. Adams, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.** "The Biden-Harris Administration is making critical investments in healthcare for moms, babies, and Black parents, including in today's Build Back Better framework. With the inclusion of the vast majority of our landmark Momnibus legislation, today's Build Back Better framework makes historic investments in the health and care of moms. It is nothing short of a game-changer for Black mothers as well as every parent bringing a child into the world. I am so proud to see the Biden-Harris Administration lifting up the voices of Black women and creating a world where maternal justice and equality are a reality."

"As a Black mother and grandmother, take it from me: Black mamas can't wait!" **Adams concluded.**

Background: The Momnibus

The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act (H.R. 959/S. 346) was reintroduced in February 2021 by Underwood, Adams, 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.

[More information on the Momnibus is available here.](#)

Background: New Jersey Decision

This amendment to the New Jersey FamilyCare Comprehensive Demonstration aligns with coverage options available under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Beginning on April 1, 2022, states will have the option to extend coverage for postpartum individuals beyond the required 60-day postpartum period through the end of the month in which a 12-month postpartum period ends.

The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to addressing the health disparities that underlie our health system. Actions under the Build Back Better agenda will provide significant funding towards improving maternal health and tackling health disparities. On April 12, 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recognized Black Maternal Health Week by announcing actions to expand access to continuous health care coverage as well as access to preventive care in rural areas in order to improve maternal health outcomes. The Administration also issued the first ever presidential proclamation on Black Maternal Health Week, calling on all Americans to recognize the importance of addressing the crisis of Black maternal mortality and morbidity in this country.

Medicaid covers nearly one in five women of reproductive age and makes pregnancy-related care accessible for more than 40 percent of people giving birth. Currently, a third of maternal deaths occur between one week to a year after childbirth, and Black women suffer three to four times more pregnancy-related deaths than white women. Providing continued Medicaid and CHIP coverage helps ensure access to the ongoing care people need during the postpartum period. The continuity of coverage available through this demonstration can help postpartum people manage chronic conditions like hypertension and diabetes, and provide access to behavioral health and other mental health care services.

This demonstration amendment will also ensure that the state can receive the enhanced funding for expenditures related to eligible people who remain covered through the demonstration and who would otherwise qualify for the Medicaid expansion adult group.

As part of this approval, New Jersey has agreed to undertake monitoring and evaluation of the demonstration for the extension period, in alignment with any applicable CMS-provided technical assistance.

For more information on the amendment to the section 1115 New Jersey FamilyCare Comprehensive Demonstration, visit: <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/section-1115-demo/demonstration-and-waiver-list/82571>.

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 Omnibus 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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