

Reps. Adams, Underwood & Sen. Booker Introduce Black Maternal Health Week Resolutions

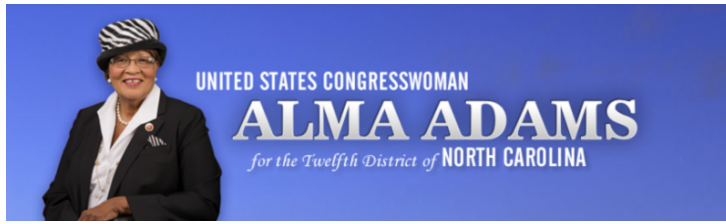


From Sam Spencer <sam.spencer@mail.house.gov>

To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>

Reply-To <sam.spencer@mail.house.gov>

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Hello Sarah,

Reps. Adams, Underwood & Sen. Booker Introduce Black Maternal Health Week Resolutions

89 Members of Congress join resolutions to raise national awareness of the state of Black maternal health in the United States.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 13, 2023) – **Congresswomen Alma Adams (NC-12)** and **Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (IL-14)** in the House, as well as **Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)** in the Senate, have introduced companion resolutions recognizing Black Maternal Health Week, “to bring national attention to the maternal health crisis in the United States and the urgent importance of reducing maternal mortality and morbidity among Black women and birthing persons.” The House resolution has 70 original cosponsors; the Senate resolution has 17 original cosponsors.

Black Maternal Health Week is observed from April 11 through April 17.

The resolution underscores the disproportionate health complications suffered by Black birthing people during pregnancy who face a maternal mortality rate three times that of their white counterparts due to structural racism and gender oppression in maternal health care experiences. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these inequities, with data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicating that the maternal mortality rate for Black women has increased by 26% since the pandemic began. In order to reverse these alarming trends, the resolution calls on Congress to “support and encourage policies grounded in the human rights, reproductive justice, and birth justice frameworks that address Black maternal health inequity.”

[A copy of the House resolution is available here.](#)

The White House has also issued [a proclamation supporting Black Maternal Health Week.](#)

"During Black Maternal Health Week we recognize maternal health disparities and recommit to creating a world where maternal justice and equality are a reality," **said Congresswoman Adams, co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.**

"In 2018, I was honored to introduce the first Congressional resolution recognizing Black Maternal Health Week with then-Senator Kamala Harris and Black Mamas Matter Alliance. In 2019, I asked the youngest Black woman elected to Congress, Lauren Underwood, if she wanted to launch a Congressional Caucus focused on Black maternal health. So, we launched the Black Maternal Health Caucus, which now boasts 115 bipartisan Members of Congress. In 2020, we introduced the Black Maternal Health Omnibus Act – a package of 12 bills to comprehensively address existing gaps in policy solutions to the maternal health crisis. The bill was crafted with Black women, by Black women and for Black women. Last Congress, we re-introduced the Omnibus, and passed the first bill from the package. I'm so excited to continue this work in this Congress, because Black mamas can't wait."

"The US maternal mortality crisis, especially among Black Americans, requires urgent attention and action," **said Senator Booker.** "As the richest country in the world, it is a travesty that our nation continues to top the maternal mortality rate among its peer countries. We must do more to address this crisis and find meaningful solutions that will end the disparities in care that Black people face when giving birth. I am proud to work with my colleagues on this resolution that calls on Congress to improve Black maternal health by providing economic support, promoting community-driven solutions to better understand the causes of maternal death and complications from birth, and increasing access to quality, affordable health care for Black communities."

"Our country's Black maternal health crisis demands urgent action," **said Congresswoman Underwood, co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.** "In 2019 I co-founded the Black Maternal Health Caucus with Congresswoman Alma Adams to respond to this crisis and advance evidence-based solutions that will save lives and end disparities. I'm thrilled to continue this work by introducing this resolution with Congresswoman Adams to recognize Black Maternal Health Week 2023 and I am grateful to the Black

Mamas Matter Alliance for their leadership in establishing this critical week of awareness and action. We must continue to elevate Black maternal health as a national priority and pass the entire Mommibus.”

In addition to Adams and Underwood, congressional co-sponsors include **Representatives Adams, Allred, Balint, Beatty, Blunt Rochester, Bonamici, Brown, Budzinski, Bush, Carson, Blunt, Carter, Cardenas, Castor, Cherfilus-McCormick, Chu, Clarke, Cleaver, Cohen, Connolly, Crockett, Crow, Davids, Dingell, Escobar, Evans, Garamendi, Garcia, Goldman, Gottheimer, Hayes, Kamlager-Dove, Kelly, Krishnamoorthi, Kuster, Lee, Jacobs, McClellan, McGovern, McCollum, Meeks, Meng, Moore, Morelle, Moulton, Nadler, Omar, Payne Jr., Plaskett, Pressley, Ross, Sablan, Scanlon, Schlotner, Sewell, Slotkin, Smith, Soto, Stansbury, Stevens, Strickland, Sykes, Thanedar, Trone, Wasserman Schultz, Watson Coleman, and Veasey.**

In addition to Booker, the resolution is cosponsored in the Senate by: **Senators Merkley, Cortez Masto, Markey, Warren, Padilla, Blumenthal, Murray, Menendez, Duckworth, Smith, Baldwin, Van Hollen, Durbin, Stabenow, Rosen, Sanders, and Brown.**

Black Mamas Matter Alliance, and **March of Dimes** are two of the supporters of the resolution.

“BMMA founded Black Maternal Health Week in 2018 to build awareness, activism, and community aimed at amplifying the voices of Black Mamas, and centering the values and traditions of the reproductive and birth justice movements. As we reckon with the upending of Roe V. Wade and the relentless attacks against reproductive rights and bodily autonomy, the theme for this year’s Black Maternal Health Week campaign - Our Bodies Belong to Us: Restoring Black Autonomy and Joy - speaks to our strength, power and resilience, and our unassailable right to live freely, safely, and joyfully.” – **Angela D. Aina, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Black Mamas Matter Alliance, Inc.**

“March of Dimes commends Representatives Alma Adams, Lauren Underwood and Senator Cory Booker for leading this year’s Black Maternal Health Week Resolution and their continued efforts to address the alarming state of Black maternal health. In the U.S., Black women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes and 50 percent more likely to have a preterm birth as compared to White women. It is past time we address the structural racism and inequities in social determinants of health that contribute so significantly to the disproportionately high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity among Black women.” – **Stacey Y. Brayboy, Sr. Vice President, Public Policy & Government Affairs**

[A full list of organizations supporting the resolution can be found here.](#)

[Quotes from additional organizations can be found here.](#)

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

Office of Congresswoman Alma Adams | 10815 David Taylor Dr., Suite 100, Charlotte, NC
28262 Phone: 704-344-9950

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

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by sam.spencer@mail.house.gov