

The MOMMIES Act

Rep. Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) and Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)

The Maximizing Outcomes for Moms through Medicaid Improvement and Enhancement of Services Act (MOMMIES) Act would improve maternal and infant health disparities by promoting dignity, respect, and culturally-responsive support during and after pregnancy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **60% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable**.¹ The MOMMIES Act aims to lessen the incidence of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity by increasing coverage for pregnant people and providing comprehensive, affordable maternal health care services.

Specifically, the MOMMIES Act addresses inequities and the maternal health crisis by:

- 1. Expanding Medicaid coverage to include a full range of services to ensure people have access to comprehensive care throughout pregnancy, labor, and postpartum.** The MOMMIES Act would extend coverage for Medicaid's pregnancy pathway from 60 days to a full year after the end of pregnancy and would ensure that new mothers have access to full comprehensive care, including oral health services, rather than services only related to their pregnancy.
- 2. Increasing Medicaid minimum reimbursement rates for maternal and obstetric services for people in underserved areas,** incentivizing people's health providers to participate in the Medicaid program.
- 3. Establishing a maternity care home model demonstration project.** Using a health, racial equity, and trauma-informed approach, the MOMMIES Act would create a demonstration project that would establish medical care homes, birth centers, and health facilities operated by tribal organizations.
- 4. Directing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to issue guidance encouraging community-based doula care.** The MOMMIES Act would direct Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Payment and Access Commission to report on the coverage of doula care under state Medicaid programs and create strategies to improve access to pre- and post-partum doula care, including community-based doula care. It would also require CMS to issue guidance to states on increasing care for doula services under Medicaid.
- 5. Studying telehealth as a mechanism for increasing access to maternity care.** MOMMIES Act would require U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to submit a report to Congress on state Medicaid's use of telehealth to increase access to maternity care, including an analysis of barriers and recommendation for increasing access to telemedicine maternity services.

Background:

- **Black women are 4 times more likely to die** from pregnancy-related complications during and after childbirth and **2 times more likely to lose their child** to premature death².
- Medicaid covers over 40% of all births nationwide and up to 70% of births in some states,³ and offers insurance coverage to low-income people.
- **Nearly 1 in 5 maternal deaths occur between 6 weeks to a year** following childbirth⁴. Currently, people who are eligible for Medicaid on the basis of pregnancy currently lose coverage 60 days after giving birth.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/maternal-deaths/pdf/vs-0507-maternal-deaths-H.pdf>

² Creanga, A.A., Syverson, C., Seek, K., & Callaghan, W.M. (2017). Pregnancy-Related Mortality in the United States, 2011-2013. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 130(2), 366-373. Retrieved 4 April 2018

³ <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/births-financed-by-medicicaid/?sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Percent%20of%20Births%20Financed%20by%20Medicaid%22,%22sort%22:%22desc%22%7D>

⁴ Maternal Mortality Review Committees. (2018). Building U.S. Capacity to Review and Prevent Maternal Deaths: Report from nine maternal mortality review committees. http://reviewtoaction.org/Report_from_Nine_MMRCs