



Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act

Representative Ayanna Pressley

Senator Cory Booker

BACKGROUND

From 1980 to 2016, the number of women in prisons across the United States increased 742 percent: there are now more than 100,000 incarcerated women, and three-quarters of them are of childbearing age.¹ Women in prison are at a heightened risk for maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity: “Incarcerated pregnant women are more likely to have...risk factors for poor perinatal outcomes than are nonincarcerated pregnant women.”¹ The threat is particularly acute for Black women, who are imprisoned at twice the rate of white women.²

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act**, led by Representative Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) and Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Richard J. Durbin (D-IL), provides funding to promote exemplary care for pregnant and postpartum people who are incarcerated. The bill also commissions a comprehensive study to understand the scope of the maternal health crisis among incarcerated people and to make recommendations to prevent maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in American prisons and jails. Finally, the bill ties federal funding for state and local prisons and jails to prohibitions on the use of restraints for incarcerated pregnant people to end the practice of shackling.

BILL SUMMARY

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act** will:

1. Use financial incentives for all state and local prisons and jails **to end the practice of shackling pregnant people.**
2. Provide funding for federal, state, and local prisons and jails to establish programs for pregnant and postpartum women in their facilities, including access to support for **doulas and other perinatal health workers, counseling, reentry assistance, maternal-infant bonding opportunities, and diversionary programs to prevent incarceration for pregnant and postpartum people.**
3. Commission a **comprehensive study on maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among incarcerated people**, with a particular focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes.
4. Study the **negative health implications of Medicaid coverage termination** for incarcerated mothers.

¹ Sufirin, Beal, Clarke, Jones, & Mosher: [Pregnancy Outcomes in US Prisons, 2016-2017](#)

² Ibid.



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ORIGINAL COSPONSORS

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act** is cosponsored by Representatives Lauren Underwood; Alma S. Adams; Ro Khanna; Nydia M. Velázquez; Lucy McBath; Adam Smith; Mary Gay Scanlon; Al Lawson; Jahana Hayes; G. K. Butterfield; Gwen Moore; Marilyn Strickland; Tim Ryan; Adam B. Schiff; Hank Johnson; Steven Horsford; Debbie Wasserman Schultz; Nanette Diaz Barragán; Ted Deutch; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; Earl Blumenauer; Seth Moulton; Darren Soto; Jerrold Nadler; David Trone; Yvette D. Clarke; Jan Schakowsky; Karen Bass; Dwight Evans; Lisa Blunt Rochester; Kathy Castor; and Terri A. Sewell.

ENDORSEMENTS

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act** is endorsed by more than 160 organizations, including:

1,000 Days, 2020 Mom, A Better Balance, Abide Women's Health Services, African American Breastfeeding Network Inc., Alliance for the Implementation of Clinical Practice Guidelines, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments, American Academy of Nursing, American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work, American Association of Birth Centers, American Association of Suicidology, American College of Nurse-Midwives, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Nurses Association, American Public Health Association, America's Health Insurance Plans, Ancient Song Doula Services, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Antelope Valley Hospital WIC Program, Anxiety and Depression Association of America, Arkansas Birthing Project, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Association of Black Cardiologists, Association of Black Women Physicians, Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs, Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, Bayard Rustin Liberation Initiative, Big Cities Health Coalition, Birth Future Foundation, Birth Supporters United, LLC, Black Mamas ATX, Black Mamas Matter Alliance, Black Women Birthing Justice, Black Women for Wellness Action Project, Black Women's Health Imperative, BreastfeedLA, California Nurse-Midwives Association, Center for American Progress, Center for Health Equity Transformation, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Center for Reproductive Rights, Centering Healthcare Institute, Childbirth Survival International, Children's Health Fund, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Cityblock Health, Commonsense Childbirth, Community Catalyst, Dem Black Mamas Podcast, Department of Ob/Gyn at Penn Medicine, Diversity Uplifts, Inc., DONA International, Doula Philosophy, Dr. Jamila Taylor, The Century Foundation (endorsing as an individual), Dr. Shalon's Maternal Action Project, El Jardin Birth & Family, Equitable Maternal Health Coalition, EverThrive IL, Every Body Texas, Every Mother Counts, Expecting Health, Federation of American Hospitals, First Focus Campaign for Children, Global Alliance for Behavioral Health & Social Justice, Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights GRR!, Happy Family Organics, Harambee Village Doulas,



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Healing Hands Community Doula Project, Health Care Service Corporation, Health Care Transformation Task Force, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), HealthConnect One, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawai'i, HealthyWomen, Huggies®, Hustle Mommies, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, Ingram Screening, LLC, INNERWISDOM, INC, International OCD Foundation, Irth/Narrative Nation, Inc., Jacobs Institute of Women's Health, Johnson & Johnson, Just Us Women Productions, Lifeline4Moms, University of Massachusetts Medical School, LOOM, Majaica, Mama Glow, Mamatoto Village, March for Moms Association, March of Dimes, Massachusetts Maternal Equity Coalition, Maternal Applications of Technology for Community Health (MATCH) Coalition, Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, Melissa Simon, MD MPH, Vice Chair Department of OBGYN Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and Director, Center for Health Equity Transformation, Mom Congress, Mom2Mom Downers Grove, MomsRising, Mothering Justice, MS Black Women's Roundtable, NAACP, NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, NACBHDD and NARMH, NARAL Pro-Choice America, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, National Association of Certified Professional Midwives, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, National Birth Equity Collaborative, National Black Nurses Association, National Council of Jewish Women, National Health Law Program, National League for Nursing, National Organization for Women, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Perinatal Task Force, National Register of Health Service Psychologists, National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership & Child First, National Student Nurses' Association, Inc., National Urban League, National WIC Association, National Women's Health Network, National Women's Law Center, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, Nzuri Doula Services, Physician Assistant Education Association, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Poppy Seed Health, Postpartum Support International, Postpartum Support International Alaska Chapter, Power to Decide, Preeclampsia Foundation, Prolacta Bioscience, Restoring Our Own Through Transformation, riskLD, Sacramento Maternal Mental Health Collaborative, Sawubona4Life, Shades Of Blue Project, SisterReach, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team, Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior, Society for Women's Health Research, The Big Push for Midwives, The Johns Hopkins Women's Mood Disorders Center, The Kennedy Forum, The National Association to Advance Black Birth, The Root Cause Coalition, Thomas Health Education and Consulting, Trust for America's Health, Union for Reform Judaism, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, Urban Mommy INC, VNA Health Care, What to Expect Project, and Women of Reform Judaism.