



2017-2018 Federal Legislative Proposals Relating to Maternal and Infant Health and Mortality

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Mothers in the United States are [dying](#) during childbirth and the one year postpartum period at an alarming rate, and [more frequently](#) than mothers in similarly situated countries. The situation is particularly critical for Black women, who are [three to four times](#) more likely than non-Hispanic white women to die during pregnancy or shortly after birth. This ongoing crisis of maternal mortality prompted a number of congressional members to introduce legislation during the 2017-2018 legislative session that addressed maternal and infant health and mortality.

Following is a summary of the legislation introduced in the 115th Congress. Three bills—H.R. 315 (Improving Access to Maternity Care Act), H.R. 1318 (Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017), and S. 3029 (PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018) —have been signed into law. The remaining legislative proposals only progressed to a first committee, though they may be re-introduced in this year’s legislative session.

BILLS PASSED AND SIGNED INTO LAW

BILL #	NAME	AUTHOR	MAJOR POINTS OF LEGISLATION
H.R. 315	Improving Access to Maternity Care Act	Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX)	Aims to address geographic shortages in maternity care by directing the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) to collect and publish data on the availability of and need for maternity care health professionals.

H.R. 1318	Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017	Rep. Jaime Herrera (R-WA)	Creates a Health and Human Services (HHS)-managed grant program to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide states and federally recognized Indian tribes and organizations with funding to track maternal mortality, • create maternal mortality review committees, • provide local departments of health with funding to establish education programs for providers related to quality maternal care, • disseminate a uniform reporting form for HHS, and • allow public disclosure in state reports. NOTE: Parallel Senate Bill is S. 1112 , the Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017, sponsored by Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND)
S. 3029	PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018	Sen. Lamar Alexander (R- TN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reauthorizes legislation that allows Centers for Disease Control to conduct research and run programs related to preterm births, including improved data tracking of preterm births • Reauthorizes Health Resources and Services Administration’s activities related to promoting healthy pregnancies and preventing preterm births • Allows formation of an HHS interagency workgroup to improve coordination and interventions related to preterm birth, infant mortality, and other adverse birth outcomes

BILLS INTRODUCED BUT DID NOT PASS OUT OF COMMITTEE:

BILL #	NAME	AUTHOR	MAJOR POINTS OF LEGISLATION
H.R. 5977	MOMMA’s Act	Rep. Kelly Robin (D-IL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves data collection and reporting on maternal mortality • Creates grant programs for the implementation, data collection, and evaluation of maternal safety bundles • Extends Medicaid coverage for postpartum women to one full year after giving birth • Provides health care providers with training to address implicit racial bias
H.R. 6805	Pregnant Women in Custody Act	Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricts the use of restraints on women who are pregnant and incarcerated

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows data collection on pregnant inmates to address their specific health needs • Ensures necessary health services and programs are provided to inmates regarding pregnancy and childbirth • Creates guidelines and educates facility employees on mental health needs of inmates before, during, and after childbirth
S. 3363	Maternal CARE Act	Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding for evidence-based quality improvements that tackle racial disparities in maternal health statistics • Creates the Pregnancy Medical Home Demonstration Project, to deliver integrated health care services to pregnant women and new mothers • Directs the National Academy of Medicine to recommend how to incorporate implicit bias training into physician education
S. 3494	MOMMIES Act	Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extends Medicaid coverage for postpartum women to one full year after giving birth • Requires full Medicaid coverage for pregnant and postpartum women, rather than coverage limited to pregnancy-related services • Establishes a maternity care home demonstration project • Extends the Affordable Care Act’s primary care bump to all primary care providers, including women’s health providers • Encourages increased access to doula care for pregnant women • Researches telemedicine and its potential to help improve Medicaid enrollee access to maternity care

For more information on this topic, please see the following National Health Law Program resources:

- [Routes to Success for Medicaid Coverage of Doula Care](#)
- [Maternal Mortality Review Committees: Step-by-Step Analysis and Action](#)
- [Using the Affordable Care Act and Other Opportunities to Address Maternal Mortality](#)