

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2024

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education & Related
Agencies
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education & Related
Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop the appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2025, we encourage you to provide robust funding for the below programs that seek to prevent maternal deaths, improve maternal health, and eliminate inequities in maternal health outcomes.

More women die from pregnancy-related complications in the United States than in any other developed country, and the rate of maternal deaths continues to rise drastically. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 700 pregnancy-related deaths occur in the U.S. each year, and more than 80 percent of these deaths are preventable. Further, CDC recently released provisional data indicating that the total infant mortality rate in the U.S. increased by 3% from 2021-2022, and additional CDC data show a marked increase in maternal deaths due to the pandemic. Significant disparities in maternal mortality exist, with Black women facing three to four times higher risks than non-Hispanic white women, and Indigenous women more than twice as likely to experience pregnancy-related complications leading to death compared to non-Hispanic white women.

Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant (Programmatic Request)– The Title V MCH Services Block Grant administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is the only federal program of its kind devoted solely to improving the health of all women and children in the United States. States, territories, and other jurisdictions use this flexible and cost-effective funding source to address their most critical maternal and child health needs. This includes supporting statewide maternal mortality reviews – the gold standard in maternal mortality surveillance – and implementing strategies to translate recommendations made by maternal mortality review committees into meaningful action. Title V also supports Special Projects of Regional and National Significance (SPRANS), such as State Maternal Health Innovation Grants, a program to implement evidence-based interventions to address critical gaps in maternity care service; the MCH Leadership, Education, and Advancement in Undergraduate Pathways (LEAP) Training Program, a program to promote the development of a diverse and representative public health and health care workforce; and the Sickle Cell Disease Newborn Screening Follow-up Program to facilitate access to quality sickle cell disease care.

Healthy Start (Programmatic Request)– The Healthy Start program provides funding to support community-based strategies to improve perinatal outcomes for women and children in communities with acute infant mortality rates. In particular, the Healthy Start program seeks to reduce disparities in infant and maternal mortality by empowering women and their families to identify and access maternal and infant health services in their communities. Further, the Healthy Start program employs women from the impacted communities who

serve as outreach workers, peer specialists, and home visitors. This approach saves money; promotes equity, as pregnant women respond better to women with the same lived experiences; bolsters employment rates; and serves as a workforce pipeline, making the Healthy Start program a critical component of federal efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality.

CDC Maternal and Infant Health Programs (Programmatic Request)– CDC supports a broad range of activities that seek to improve the health of moms and babies and reduce disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes. This includes implementation of the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act (P.L. 115-344) through the Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality (ERASE MM) Program to provide funding, technical assistance, and guidance to state maternal mortality review committees. CDC also supports perinatal quality collaboratives, which are state or multi-state networks of teams working to improve the quality of care for mothers and babies. Another example of CDC’s maternal and infant health work includes the HEAR HER Campaign, a communication campaign to increase awareness of warning signs that could lead to pregnancy-related death or delivery complications and strengthen patient and provider communication.

National Institutes of Health (Programmatic Request)– Research is critically important to optimizing the health of women and their families in the United States and identifying the causes behind pregnancy-related deaths and complications. Much of the research on pregnancy in the U.S. occurs at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Broadly, 24 of 27 institutes and centers at the NIH support at least one grant or project related to pregnancy-related research. For example, the Maternal-Fetal Medicine Units Network, a network of 12 centers across the country, conducts clinical studies to improve maternal, fetal, and neonatal health. NIH is also working to advance safe and effective therapies for pregnant and lactating women as recommended in 2019 by the federal Task Force on Research Specific to Pregnant Women and Lactating Women (authorized under P.L. 114-255). Further, NIH funding supports research to identify the best practices to support pregnant and postpartum women with a substance use disorder. Strengthened, prioritized support for maternal health research at the NIH is crucial to fully understanding maternal health outcomes, inequities, and disparities in the U.S.

Providing robust funding for each of these programs is critical to improving maternal and infant health in the U.S. Thank you for your consideration of this request to provide robust funding for programs that seek to prevent maternal deaths, eliminate inequities in maternal health outcomes, and improve maternal health.

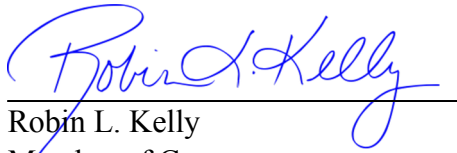
Sincerely,



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



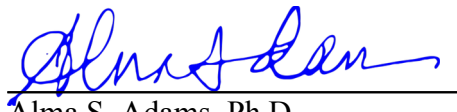
Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



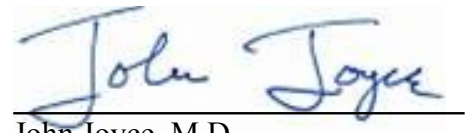
Robin L. Kelly
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Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress




Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress




John Joyce, M.D.
Member of Congress




Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



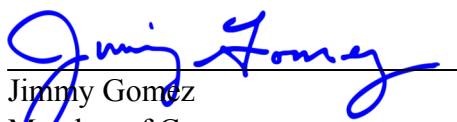
Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



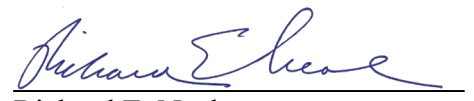
Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



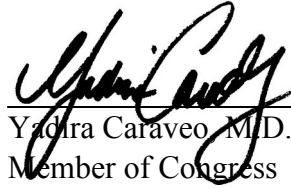
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



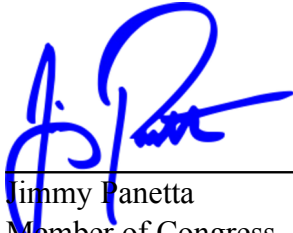
Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



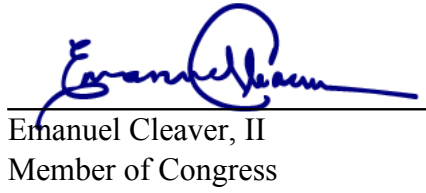
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Yachira Caraveo, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



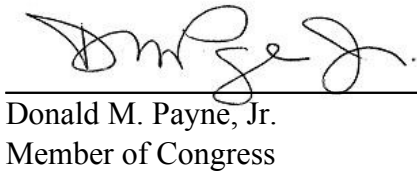
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



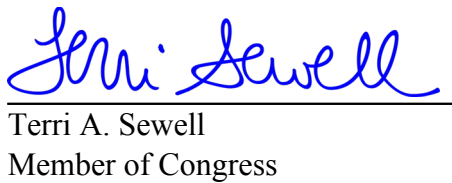
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



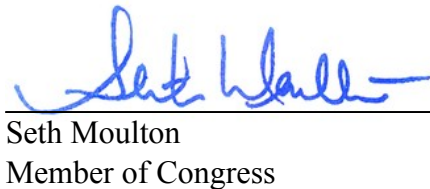
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
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Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



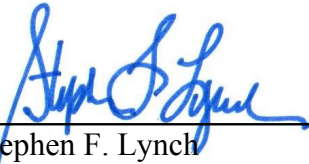
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
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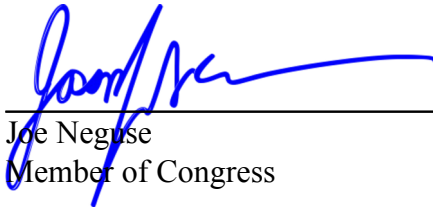
Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



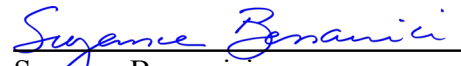
Stephen F. Lynch
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Jason Crow
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Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



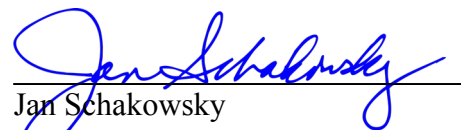
Andy Kim
Member of Congress



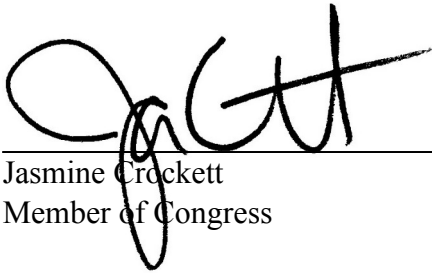
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



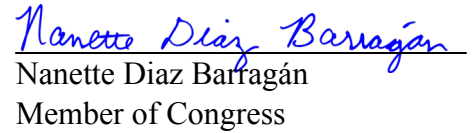
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



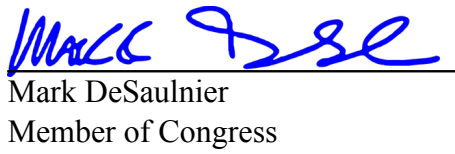
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



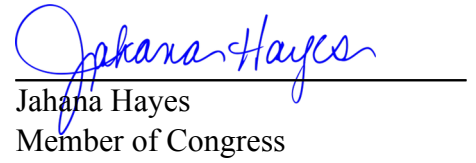
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



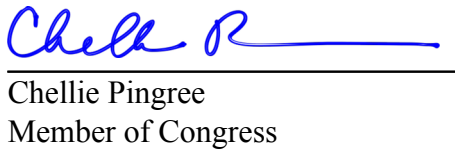
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



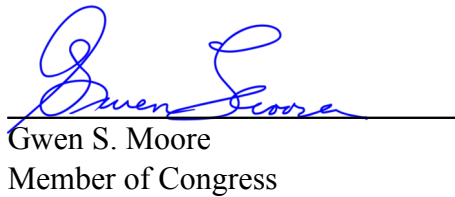
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



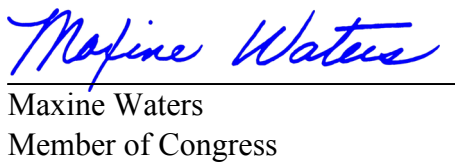
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



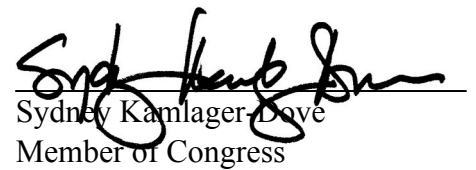
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



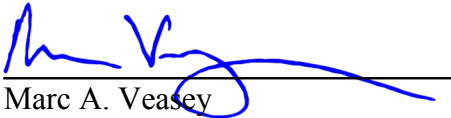
Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



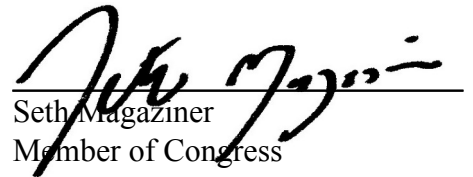
Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



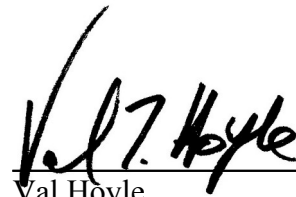
Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



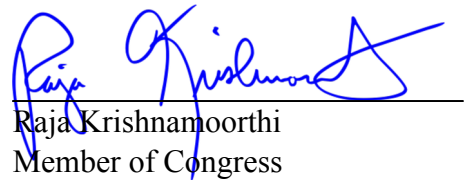
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
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Chris Deluzio
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



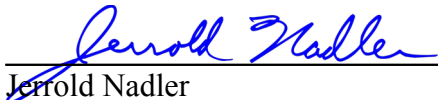
Jen A. Kiggans
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



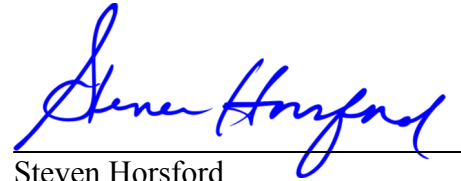
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



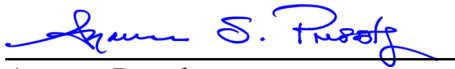
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



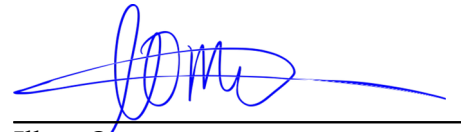
Katie Porter
Member of Congress



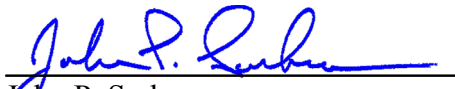
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



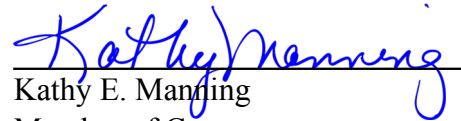
John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Kathy E. Manning
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



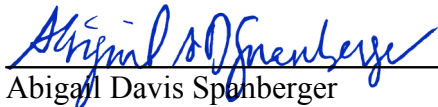
Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



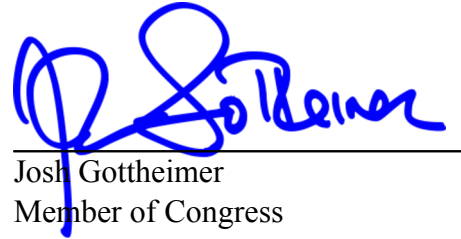
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



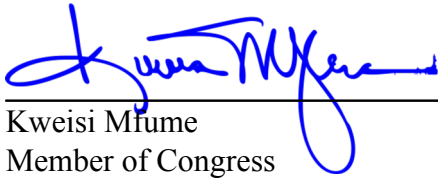
Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



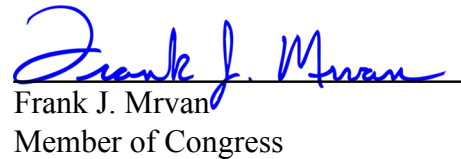
Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



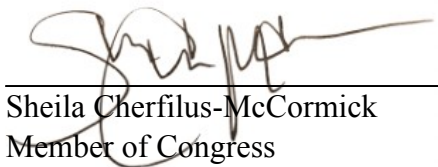
Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



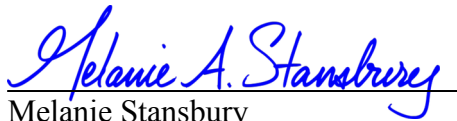
Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



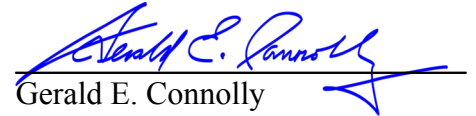
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



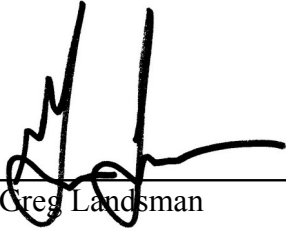
Wiley Nickel
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



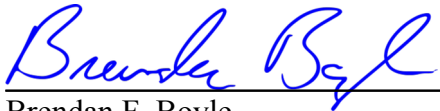
Dan Meuser
Member of Congress



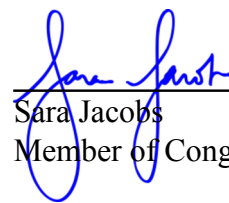
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress