

November 19, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, and Majority Leader Schumer,

We, the undersigned 152 state elected officials across 38 states, call on the U.S. Congress to enact permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year. Congress must seize the opportunity to ensure quality healthcare access for pregnant and postpartum individuals in every state across the nation.

Pregnant and birthing people are directly impacted by Medicaid, with nearly half of births in the U.S. being covered by Medicaid. Despite women and birthing people experiencing pregnancy-related complications and morbidities up to one-year postpartum, federal Medicaid and CHIP coverage ends only 60 days after birth. Furthermore, approximately thirty-three percent of pregnancy-related deaths occur within a week to one year after birth, and Black and Indigenous women are disproportionately impacted. Black women are 3 to 4 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women are, and Indigenous women 2.5 times more likely. The Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention finds that 60% of maternal deaths are preventable. Other complications related to maternal mental health, such as postpartum depression, can also affect women and birthing people, with diagnoses as late as three years postpartum. Through a mandatory provision on postpartum Medicaid, state officials can work to meet the needs of women and birthing people in the critical postpartum period.

The current Medicaid disenrollment freeze implemented due to the pandemic demonstrates that as a nation, we are capable of providing continuous healthcare for women and birthing people beyond the 60-day postpartum threshold. An additional measure, the American Rescue Plan allows states to voluntarily extend postpartum Medicaid coverage using a state plan amendment, but very few states have taken this option and will not be enough to provide needed healthcare coverage to birthing people. While this measure is a positive step, the varied uptake by states widens disparate access to postpartum care across our nation. These short-term and emergency actions do not provide the consistent coverage birthing people need beyond the pandemic. The most effective and equitable measure is permanent, mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year.

As state elected officials, we are committed to ensuring access to quality healthcare for our constituents. Through strong investments in maternal health care coverage and programs, we can work with community-based organizations focused on advancing maternal health, particularly among Black and Indigenous populations who experience higher maternal mortality and morbidity. We urge Congress to pass permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year so that our mothers, families, and communities can survive and thrive regardless of the state in which they live.

Sincerely,

State Representative Geran Tarr, Alaska

State Senator Rosanna Gabaldon, Arizona

State Representative Yadira Caraveo, Colorado
State Representative Susan Lontine, Colorado
State Representative Emily Sirota, Colorado
State Representative Brianna Titone, Colorado
State Senator Gary Winfield, Connecticut
State Representative Kate Farrar, Connecticut
State Representative Eleni Kavros DeGraw, Connecticut
State Representative Quentin “Q” Phipps, Connecticut
State Representative Robyn A. Porter, Connecticut
State Representative Michael D. Quinn, Connecticut
State Senator Stephanie Hansen, Delaware
State Senator Sarah McBride, Delaware
State Senator Marie Pinkney, Delaware
State Senator Nicole Poore, Delaware
State Representative Melissa Minor-Brown, Delaware
State Representative Dotie Joseph, Florida
State Senator Kim Jackson, Georgia
State Senator Elena Parent, Georgia
State Representative Rhonda M Burnough, Georgia
State Representative Park Cannon, Georgia
State Representative Jasmine Clark, Georgia
State Representative Viola Davis, Georgia
State Representative Stacey Evans, Georgia
State Representative CaMia Hopson, Georgia

State Representative Shelly Hutchinson, Georgia
State Representative Marvin Lim, Georgia
State Representative Donna McLeod, Georgia
State Representative Rebecca Mitchell, Georgia
State Representative Kim Schofield, Georgia
State Representative Beth Moore, Georgia
State Representative Sheila C. Nelson, Georgia
State Representative Shea Roberts, Georgia
State Representative Mary Robichaux, Georgia
State Representative Renitta Shannon, Georgia
State Senator Janet Petersen, Iowa
State Senator Sarah Trone Garriott, Iowa
State Representative Marti Anderson, Iowa
State Representative Kam Buckner, Illinois
State Representative Carolyn Jackson, Indiana
State Senator Mary A. Ware, Kansas
State Representative McKenzie Cantrell, Kentucky
State Representative Joni Jenkins, Kentucky
State Representative Attica Scott, Kentucky
State Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman, Louisiana
State Representative Mandie Landry, Louisiana
State Senator Jo Comerford, Massachusetts
State Representative Christine P. Barber, Massachusetts
State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, Massachusetts
State Senator Shelly Hettleman, Maryland

State Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr, Maryland
State Delegate David Moon, Maryland
State Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, Maryland
State Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Maryland
State Senator Anne Carney, Maine
State Representative Victoria Doudera, Maine
State Representative Thom Harnett, Maine
State Representative Jay McCreight, Maine
State Representative Rebecca Millett, Maine
State Representative Laurie Osher, Maine
State Representative Bill Pluecker, Maine
State Representative Amy Roeder, Maine
State Representative Lynne Williams, Maine
State Senator Rosemary Bayer, Michigan
State Representative Rachel Hood, Michigan
State Representative Laurie Pohutsky, Michigan
State Representative Ranjeev Puri, Michigan
State Representative Mike Freiberg, Minnesota
State Representative Ingrid Burnett, Missouri
State Representative Tracy McCreery, Missouri
State Representative Sonya Williams Barnes, Mississippi
State Representative Jessica Karjala, Montana
State Senator Sydney Batch, North Carolina
State Senator Sarah Crawford, North Carolina

State Senator Natasha Marcus, North Carolina

State Senator Natalie Murdock, North Carolina

State Senator Gladys A. Robinson, North Carolina

State Representative Susan Fisher, North Carolina

State Representative Pricey Harrison, North Carolina

State Representative Julie von Haefen, North Carolina

State Senator Tim Mathern, North Dakota

State Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, Nebraska

State Senator Becky Whitley, New Hampshire

State Representative Richard Abel, New Hampshire

State Representative Efstathia Booras, New Hampshire

State Representative Timothy Horrigan, New Hampshire

State Representative Rebecca McBeath, New Hampshire

State Representative Maria Elizabeth Perez, New Hampshire

State Representative Alexis Simpson, New Hampshire

State Representative Edith M. Tucker, New Hampshire

State Representative Andrea Romero, New Mexico

State Representative Liz Thomson, New Mexico

State Assemblymember Michelle Gorelow, Nevada

State Assemblymember Sarah Peters, Nevada

State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, New York

State Senator Michelle Hinchey, New York

State Senator Liz Krueger, New York

State Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas, New York

State Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, New York

State Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, New York

State Senator Nickie J. Antonio, Ohio

State Senator Teresa Fedor, Ohio

State Representative Janine Boyd, Ohio

State Representative Allison Russo, Ohio

State Representative Rachel Prusak, Oregon

State Representative Anna Williams, Oregon

State Senator Lisa M. Boscola, Pennsylvania

State Senator Maria Collett, Pennsylvania

State Senator Carolyn T. Comitta, Pennsylvania

State Senator John Kane, Pennsylvania

State Senator Tim Kearney, Pennsylvania

State Senator Nikil Saval, Pennsylvania

State Senator Judy Schwank, Pennsylvania

State Representative Jessica Benham, Pennsylvania

State Representative Danilo Burgos, Pennsylvania

State Representative Dan Frankel, Pennsylvania

State Representative Nancy Guenst, Pennsylvania

State Representative Carol Hill-Evans, Pennsylvania

State Representative Malcolm Kenyatta, Pennsylvania

State Representative Rick Krajewski, Pennsylvania

State Representative Michael Schlossberg, Pennsylvania

State Senator Cynthia Mendes, Rhode Island

State Representative Liana Cassar, Rhode Island

State Representative Terri Cortvriend, Rhode Island
State Representative Susan Donovan, Rhode Island
State Representative Joshua Giraldo, Rhode Island
State Representative Rebecca Kislak, Rhode Island
State Representative Michelle E McGaw, Rhode Island
State Representative Brandon Potter, Rhode Island
State Representative Marcia Ranglin-Vassell, Rhode Island
State Representative Teresa Tanzi, Rhode Island
State Senator Sara Kyle, Tennessee
State Representative Gloria Johnson, Tennessee
State Representative Jasmine Crockett, Texas
State Representative Ina Minjarez, Texas
State Representative Shawn Thierry, Texas
State Representative Rosemary Lesser, Utah
State Senator Kesha Ram Hinsdale, Vermont
State Representative Selene Colburn, Vermont
State Representative Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, Vermont
State Representative Barbara Rachelson, Vermont
State Representative Taylor Small, Vermont
State Representative Tanya Vyhovsky, Vermont
State Senator Marko Liias, Washington
State Senator Emily Randall, Washington
State Representative Nicole Macri, Washington
State Senator LaTonya Johnson, Wisconsin
State Senator Kelda Roys, Wisconsin

State Representative Jill Billings, Wisconsin

State Representative Katrina Shankland, Wisconsin

State Representative Lisa Subeck, Wisconsin