

April 9, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Thune, Leader Jeffries, and Leader Schumer,

On behalf of healthcare professionals and patients across the country, the undersigned organizations write to express our serious concerns about the harmful impact cuts to the Medicaid program could have on the nation's mothers and families. As you consider policy proposals, we urge you to reject those that weaken the program or create barriers to care for patients, particularly pregnant and postpartum women, children, and families.

Currently, Medicaid covers more than 40 percent of births nationally and more than 50 percent of births in at least four states.¹ Nineteen percent of adult women are enrolled in Medicaid.² Together with the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicaid provides more than 1.5 million low-income women access to the pre- and postnatal care that is essential to healthy pregnancies and healthy infants. Any disruptions in this care could have severe negative effects on the already unacceptable maternal and infant mortality rates in the United States.³

In 2021, Congress enacted critical legislation that for the first time created an option for states to extend Medicaid's postpartum coverage to 12 months. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 30 percent of maternal deaths occur between 43 and 365 days postpartum,⁴ confirming that postpartum Medicaid extension can and does save lives. As of February 2025, 48 states and the District of Columbia have adopted this extension policy.

Proposed changes to Medicaid, including altering the federal-state cost sharing structure and adding barriers to coverage such as work requirements, will force states to make

¹ Medicaid covers more than 50 percent of births in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi.
<https://www.kff.org/policy-watch/top-5-things-to-know-about-women-and-medicaid-ahead-of-the-election/>

² <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/fact-sheet/womens-health-insurance-coverage/>

³ <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2023/jan/us-health-care-global-perspective-2022>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/maternal-mortality/php/data-research/mmrc-2017-2019.html>

decisions that could limit coverage for pregnant women, new mothers, and their newborns. For instance, to address budget shortfalls created by Medicaid reforms, states could choose to lower Medicaid and CHIP income eligibility limits for pregnant women or eliminate the life-saving postpartum extension. Further, reductions in federal support could force states to reduce Medicaid provider reimbursement rates, causing maternity care clinicians to leave the program or limit the number of Medicaid patients they care for.

Medicaid cuts that would reduce program eligibility or erect barriers to enrollment threaten to increase uncompensated care and attendant medical debt, which could accelerate closure of labor and delivery units in rural and underserved communities.⁵ Additional closures would increase the number of maternity deserts, counties with limited or no access to maternity care, across the United States.⁶

We appreciate the opportunity to uplift the needs of pregnant and postpartum women and the importance of the Medicaid program to their health. We look forward to working with you to improve the Medicaid program so it continues to deliver on the promise of healthy mothers, infants, and families. Please contact Rebecca Abbott (rabbott@smfm.org), Senior Director of Advocacy at the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, if you have questions or would like to meet with members of our organizations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Medical Women's Organization
American Nurses Association
American Society of Hematology
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Baby-Friendly USA
BirthNet
Center for Law and Social Policy
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Community Catalyst
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC)
Every Mother Counts
EverThrive Illinois
Families USA
First Focus Campaign for Children
Foundation for Black Women's Wellness

⁵ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2025/03/08/medicaid-cuts-rural-hospitals/>

⁶ <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/united-states/maternity-care-deserts>

Futures Without Violence
HealthyWomen
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition
La Leche League Alliance
Lifeline for Families and Lifeline for Moms at UMass Chan Medical School
Life With Baby
March of Dimes
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
Mind the Gap Coalition/ PSI
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Diaper Bank Network
National Institute for Children's Health Quality
National League for Nursing
National Partnership for Women & Families
Preeclampsia Foundation
Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health
Postpartum Support International
Postpartum Support International - North Carolina Chapter
Postpartum Support International - Montana Chapter
Postpartum Support International - Virginia Chapter
Serving At-Risk Families Everywhere, Inc.
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Tennessee Justice Center
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
Upstream USA
Union of Reform Judaism
West Virginia Breastfeeding Alliance

cc: The Honorable Mike Crapo, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Brett Guthrie, Chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee