



MOMNIBUS

**BLACK MATERNAL
HEALTH CAUCUS**

AAFA Is Proud to Support Major Legislative Package Addressing America's Black Maternal Health Crisis

The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act includes 12 bills to end maternal mortality along with racial and ethnic disparities in outcomes

Washington, D.C., February 8th, 2021 – The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is proud to endorse the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021. It is a legislative package introduced today by Representatives Lauren Underwood (IL-14) and Alma Adams (NC-12), Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ), and members of the Black Maternal Health Caucus. Maternal mortality rates in America are the worst among the most developed nations. Defined as a public health crisis, Black moms are dying at higher rates than any other group.



The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021 will build on existing maternal health legislation. It includes policies to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage. It also includes support for moms and babies exposed to increased risks due to climate change. AAFA highlights research which shows a link between in utero exposure to air pollution and the development of asthma in children. According to AAFA's [Asthma Disparities in America](#) report, moms of color living in urban areas are often at greatest risk from environmental pollutants. Black women are also more likely to die from asthma than any other group.

“The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is proud to support the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act. Asthma disproportionately impacts Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous Americans. It is one of the most common chronic conditions that can complicate pregnancy. Social determinants and structural racism drive persistent health disparities, especially for Black mothers,” Kenneth Mendez, CEO and president of AAFA shared in support of the legislation. “We are encouraged to see meaningful legislation aimed at addressing the maternal health crisis in the U.S. which is disproportionately impacting Black women and their families. We thank Representative Underwood, Representative Adams, and Senator Booker for their leadership and look forward to working in partnership with the many supporting organizations of the Momnibus Act.”



In all, the Momnibus Act combines 12 bills to address America's maternal health crisis. Additional legislative highlights include:

- Investments in improving social determinants of health like housing, transportation and nutrition which can impact maternal health outcomes.
- Funding for community-based organizations working to improve maternal health outcomes and promote equity.
- Improvement of data collection to better understand the causes of the maternal health crisis in the U.S. and form more solutions to address it.
- Payment models to incentivize high-quality maternity care and continuity of health insurance coverage from pregnancy through labor and delivery and up to 1 year after birth.
- Strengthening programs to improve maternal health during COVID-19 and other public health emergencies.
- Promoting maternal vaccinations to protect the health and safety of moms and babies.

Not only does the U.S. have the highest pregnancy-related death rate in the developed world, it is also the only rate that continues to go up. Black women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications compared to white women. The legislation also seeks to provide more support for moms in the workforce around the time of giving birth. It also focuses on high-risk populations including pregnant veterans, incarcerated moms, Hispanic, Indigenous, and Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) Americans. These groups also experience higher rates of poor maternal health outcomes.

- To learn more about what AAFA is doing to support the Momnibus Act and reduce racial disparities in asthma, especially for Black moms, head to aafa.org.
- AAFA is currently developing a new asthma support program specifically for Black women. The organization is also working with partners on additional programs aimed at reducing racial disparities Black women face in both asthma and pregnancy.
- AAFA also has a new resource for moms with asthma: [Asthma During Pregnancy. What You Need to Know When You're Expecting](#)
- You can expect more new and additional content from AAFA on asthma in pregnant and lactating women during 2021.
- You can also find out more details on the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021 here: [Black Maternal Health Caucus](#)

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About AAFA

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA offers extensive support for individuals and families affected by asthma and allergic diseases, such as food allergies and atopic dermatitis (eczema). Through its online patient support communities, network of local chapters and affiliated support groups, AAFA empowers patients and their families by providing practical, evidence-based information and community programs and services. AAFA is the only asthma and allergy patient advocacy group that is certified to meet the standards of excellence set by the National Health Council. For more information, visit www.aafa.org.