

# **U.S. Rep. Moore, Sen. Baldwin: Introduce legislation to respond to maternal health crisis by increasing the number of culturally competent perinatal workers**

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Among high-income countries, America has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world, and more than 4 out of 5 of these deaths are preventable. This crisis magnifies the racial health disparities in our nation, as Black mothers are three times more likely to die in childbirth than white mothers. In Wisconsin, the maternal mortality rate of Black mothers is five times the rate of white mothers.

Congresswoman Moore, a member of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, remains a leading champion in improving maternal and infant outcomes. She is a leading cosponsor of the Momnibus, a package of 13 bills aimed at addressing the maternal health crisis spearheaded by Black Maternal Health Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Lauren Underwood and Alma Adams PhD.

Today, Congresswoman Moore and Senator Baldwin announced the re-introduction of the Perinatal Workforce Act, included in the Momnibus, which will help build a pipeline of diverse, culturally competent perinatal workers using grant programs to increase the number of doulas, nurses, physician assistants, and community health workers in our communities.

“My home state of Wisconsin holds the tragic and sad distinction of having one of the worst maternal and infant outcomes in the country, with Black mothers five times more likely to die in childbirth than white mothers. The nexus of systemic

racism, inadequate access to health care, medical mistreatment, and poverty continues to cost lives. I am honored to join my friend and dear colleague, Senator Tammy Baldwin, in working to address America's alarmingly high maternal mortality rates. Ensuring every mother has access to culturally competent perinatal workers is vital to ending this crisis," **said Congresswoman Gwen Moore.**

"In Wisconsin and across the country, we are dealing with a maternal health crisis that has disproportionately impacted women of color. We must do more to address inequities in our healthcare system and save lives," **said Senator Tammy Baldwin.** "Expecting moms shouldn't have to worry about getting access to high-quality care during their pregnancy. That's why I'm proud to work with my colleagues to diversify and grow our maternal health workforce and provide mothers with the care they deserve."

Specifically, the Perinatal Workforce Act will:

1. Call on the Secretary of Health and Human Services to (1) provide guidance to states on the promotion of diverse maternity care teams and (2) to study how culturally congruent maternity care promotes better outcomes for moms, especially minority women.
2. Provide funding to establish and scale programs that will grow and diversify the maternal health workforce, increasing the number of nurses, physician assistants, and other perinatal health workers like doulas, community health workers, and peer supporters who moms can trust throughout their pregnancies, labor and delivery, and the postpartum period.
3. Study the barriers that prevent women – particularly low-income and minority women – from entering maternity care professions.

Read the bill summary, [here](#).

Read the legislation, [here](#).