



## Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Republicans on JFC Reject Governor Evers' Healthy Women, Healthy Babies Proposal in State Budget in Advance of Vote in Assembly**

MADISON - Last week, the Republican majority on the Joint Finance Committee voted to eliminate funding in the state budget to support healthy birth outcomes for moms and babies who are at significant risk of experiencing poor health outcomes due to health inequities. Remarkably, Republicans on Joint Finance also blocked Governor Evers' proposal to expand Medicaid coverage to postpartum women from 2 to 12 months, which is proven to help improve the health of new moms and their babies due to enhanced access to health care services during a time when they are most at risk for medical complications. The State Budget is scheduled for a vote before the full Assembly today.

"Governor Evers' Healthy Women, Healthy Babies proposal presented a great opportunity to care for our communities in a way that is consistent with values shared by the vast majority of Wisconsinites. We can all agree that investing in policies that will help moms and babies in our state thrive is something our elected officials should prioritize," stated Mike Murray, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin (PPAWI). "Unfortunately, the Republicans on the Joint Finance Committee voted to reject this opportunity. Our elected leaders have a responsibility to do everything in their power to improve health outcomes for all Wisconsinites. The least we should be doing is expanding health coverage for new mothers and their babies in the first year of their lives to provide them with a better chance at a healthy life from the very beginning," concluded Murray.

Wisconsin is one of the worst states for Black Infant Mortality with Black babies dying nearly three times more often than white babies. Black women in Wisconsin are five times more likely to die from childbirth than white women. The medical community agrees that both of these troubling health disparities would be greatly improved through improved access to maternal health care and other support services.

"PPAWI believes part of having a healthy community is making sure everybody has access to the health care they need," stated Tanya Atkinson, President of PPAWI. Planned Parenthood recognizes how health inequities have a disproportionate impact on the health, wellbeing, and financial stability of patients—particularly those who are Black or other People of Color. We call on our elected leaders to listen to health equity organizations and medical experts to work in ways that supports the overall well-being of our communities and begin to address health disparities in Wisconsin," Atkinson concluded.

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*Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin is the advocacy arm of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin. PPAWI engages in legislative and educational activity and works to elect candidates to office that support these goals.*