

Talking Points: The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act



For over a century, National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) has fought to advance the wellbeing, health, and dignity of women, children, and families. Guided by the Jewish imperative of *pikuach nefesh*, or saving a life, NCJW works to protect maternal health, spanning from establishing Mothers' Health Bureaus in the 1930s to our contemporary advocacy for reproductive freedom. Today, too many mothers die from preventable, pregnancy-related causes as the US experiences a maternal and reproductive health care crisis — disproportionately impacting communities of color. We need the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act to protect the lives of pregnant people.

Background

- Despite being the richest country in the world, the US has the highest maternal mortality rate among developed nations. More than 80% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable, and tragically, Black mothers die of pregnancy complications at nearly three times the rate of white mothers.
- Black women are more likely to experience complications, receive inadequate care, and face systemic barriers to reproductive health due to structural and medical racism throughout the health care system, with health outcomes worsened due to economic and social inequalities.
- These disparities have only increased with abortion bans and restrictions enacted around the country since the Supreme Court's 2022 decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

Talking Points

- The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act is a package of 13 bills to comprehensively address the health disparities faced by people of color who give birth. Led by Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Representatives Lauren Underwood (D-IL) and Alma Adams (D-NC), the Momnibus Act will make giving birth safer for Black and Brown people and all who give birth by addressing the medical, non-medical, and social causes that contribute to high rates of maternal mortality.
- The bill would expand nutritional programs for women and infants, increase and diversify maternal health care workers to cover the swaths of maternity care deserts, and improve data collection regarding maternal care.
- Health care is a right, not a privilege, for all — before, during, and after pregnancy and birth.
- As Jews, our obligation of *achrayut*, or social responsibility, compels us to remedy injustice. We must work to fight against racial inequity and protect lives.
- **Congress must pass the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act to help end the maternal health crisis.**