March 8, 2017

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler  
1107 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ryan Costello  
326 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
2426 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette  
2111 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Herrera Beutler, Congressman Conyers, Congressman Costello, and Congresswoman DeGette:

On behalf of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) we are writing to thank you for your leadership on working towards preventing maternal mortality, and would like to offer our strong support for the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017.

Established in 1977, SMFM is the medical professional society for obstetricians who have additional training in the area of high-risk, complicated pregnancies. Our members see the sickest and most vulnerable patients, and aim to improve care, research, advocacy and education for pregnant women.

We have long been supportive of and vocal about the high maternal mortality rates in the United State, as well as the wide racial/ethnic disparities in these rates. We can do better for mothers and families across the country, and the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017 is a great first step to addressing preventable maternal deaths, along with the extremely costly consequences of severe maternal mortality and morbidity.

As you are well aware, the statistics on maternal death in the United States are staggering - the U.S. is ranked 50th globally for its maternal mortality rate, and the maternal death rate in the U.S. continues to rise. The U.S. ranks behind other developed countries in maternal mortality rates, despite major advancements in medical technology and treatments. Furthermore, maternal morbidity rates continue to rise at an alarming rate. This legislation will set the groundwork for states to set up maternal mortality review committees so that they can assess and utilize available data to address maternal mortality. In addition to being a health care issue, maternal mortality is also a social justice issue as it disproportionately affected minority and low-income women.

Again, thank you for introducing this important legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact our Chief Advocacy Officer, Katie Schubert, at kschubert@smfm.org or (202) 836-2519 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Alfred Abuhamad, MD  
President

Matt J Granato, LL.M., MBA  
Chief Executive Officer