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June 25, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Senator Murray,

On behalf of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), we write to urge you to support and move forward bills S. 1112, the bipartisan *Maternal Health Accountability Act*, as well as S. 3029, the *PREEMIE Reauthorization Act*. These bills demonstrate a commitment to improving the health of women and families across the country and prioritize action in response to the continuing maternal mortality issue in the United States.

Compared to other developed nations, the United States has an unacceptably high rate of maternal death from pregnancy-related complications. Additionally, maternal mortality disproportionately affects women of ethnic minorities in the U.S. Establishing or strengthening state maternal mortality review committees (MMRCs) will help address this public health emergency. Specifically, MMRCs allow public health departments, health care providers and consumers to fully understand the “why” behind the mortality rate as well as to begin to address the issue of health disparities. The preventable death of a mother is nothing short of a tragedy for a family and a community. Moving S. 1112 from Committee to the floor is a good first step to address our nation’s maternal mortality crisis. We urge you to move this legislation forward.

Additionally, we urge the Committee’s support of S. 3029, the PREEMIE Reauthorization bill. As you know, one in every ten infants born in the United States is a preterm birth. When the PREEMIE Act was first signed in December of 2006, those efforts to expand research, education and intervention to prevent infant mortality were successful and led to an overall decrease in preterm birth rates between the years of 2007-2014. The Committee’s commitment to S. 3029’s passage will help continued efforts to decrease infant mortality rates.



SMFM's mission is to optimize the health of high-risk pregnancy women and their babies. Both bills S. 1112 and S. 3029 support this work, and we therefore strongly urge you to support passage of these bills, so that they may proceed to the Senate floor for a vote.

Sincerely,



Sean Blackwell, MD
President



Matt Granato, LI.M., MBA
Chief Executive Officer

