

For Immediate Release

December 16, 2022

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Doctors, Nation's High-Risk Pregnancy Experts, and Advocates React to Release of Texas Maternal Mortality Review Committee Report

AUSTIN, TX – Yesterday, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) jointly released a [report](#) containing the MMMRC's findings and recommendations for addressing the state's maternal health crisis. The Joint Report's release comes more than three months after its statutorily mandated due date of September 1, 2022 and is the direct result of pressure – including [threats of legal action](#) – from advocates across the State of Texas; state lawmakers; health care professionals, including the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM); and Democracy Forward.

Recommendations contained in prior reports, which have been issued every two years since 2014, have informed the Texas State Legislature's response to the maternal health crisis in Texas. The Joint Report released yesterday, which examines cases of maternal death that occurred in Texas in 2019, substantially updates Texas' understanding of the risks facing pregnant people. Critically, the report found that persistent disparities in maternal mortality continue to disproportionately impact Black women.

On November 2, on behalf of SMFM, Democracy Forward sent a [letter](#) to DSHS and the MMMRC to insist they comply with Texas law by releasing the Joint Report. SMFM is represented by Democracy Forward and co-counsel Reed Smith LLP.

"We are pleased that the long-awaited Joint Report on maternal mortality has finally been released and we look forward to reviewing the MMMRC's findings and recommendations," said **Joanne Stone, MD, MS, President of SMFM**. "However, the release of this report is only the beginning of the fight to prevent further maternal deaths in Texas. For example, compelling evidence demonstrates that extending Medicaid coverage for 12 months after birth is beneficial to the health of women and their families. We urge policymakers to take this and other MMMRC recommendations seriously because lives depend on it."

"The failure of DSHS to release this report in the timeframe required by law is the latest example of the Abbott Administration's apparent belief that it is above the law," said **Skye Perryman, President & CEO of Democracy Forward**. "It shouldn't take being threatened with a lawsuit to do what the state is legally required to do for the health of mothers in Texas. As our clients review the joint report closely, we encourage Governor Abbott, Lt. Governor Patrick, and Texas lawmakers to finally step up and protect the health of all Texans, especially Black women, whom the report shows disproportionately experience adverse maternal health outcomes."

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