Pregnancy Experts Applaud Massachusetts Efforts to Reduce Maternal Deaths

Budget Provides Additional Support for the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee

August 15, 2023 - Massachusetts governor, Maura Healey, signed into law the Commonwealth's fiscal year 2024 budget on August 9, 2023, which included an additional $350,000 to support the Massachusetts' Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC). In response, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine issued the following statement.

"On behalf of the world's leading experts in high-risk pregnancies, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) applauds Massachusetts' investment in its Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee. SMFM is especially grateful for the leadership of Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and Senator Becca Rausch in securing this new funding. This investment will allow the MMMRC to address disparities in maternal health outcomes more adequately and encourage consistent case review and reporting of findings and recommendations.

The United States has the highest rate of maternal death among high-income nations, with significant racial disparities and large differences in rates between states. State and local maternal mortality review committees are widely recognized as essential bodies in understanding why people die while pregnant, during labor, and in the postpartum period. Further, the conclusions made by the experts who serve on these committees help to inform and advance evidence-informed policies to prevent future deaths.

Despite advances in maternal health, the Massachusetts MMMRC's latest full report is nearly a decade old and covers data between 2000 and 2007. Every other state with a full committee report covers more recent data. The new funding will allow the MMMRC to keep pace with other states and ultimately improve outcomes for pregnant people and families in Massachusetts.

When they consider the fiscal year 2025 budget next year, SMFM encourages the Senate and House Ways and Means Committee to provide sustained support for the MMMRC."