



**BlueCross BlueShield
Association**

An Association of Independent
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

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March 6, 2020

The Honorable Lauren Underwood
Co-Chair
Black Maternal Health Caucus
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Alma Adams
Co-Chair
Black Maternal Health Caucus
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwomen Underwood and Adams:

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) strongly supports efforts to improve maternal health outcomes and would like to commend the Black Maternal Health Caucus for introducing the “Black Maternal Health Caucus Omnibus,” a package of critical bills which focus on addressing gaps in existing maternal healthcare legislation.

BCBSA represents the 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies nationwide that collectively provide healthcare coverage to one in three Americans. BCBS companies are working with physician, hospital and community partners to lead initiatives that break down barriers, help address disparities and close critical access gaps for safer and healthier pregnancies, deliveries and postpartum experiences.

Despite tremendous health advances, the United States continues to experience some of the highest rates of maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among developed countries. Across the U.S., maternity care deserts, continued disparities in the rates of health insurance coverage and affordability concerns are threatening women’s access to necessary care before, during and after childbirth. These barriers, among other challenges, help contribute to substantial racial disparities facing African American women.

BCBSA supports the “Omnibus” package as an important step in improving the health outcomes of pregnant women and mothers, particularly African American and Native American women, incarcerated women, female veterans and others.

We thank the Caucus for considering this important legislation and look forward to continuing to work with lawmakers to advance these proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justine Handelman".

Justine Handelman
Senior Vice President, Office of Policy and Representation