

Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act

Representative Ayanna Pressley

Senators Cory Booker, Dick Durbin, and Mazie Hirono

More Resources:



BACKGROUND

From 1980 to 2023, the number of women in prisons across the United States increased by more than 600 percent.¹ As the number of incarcerated women has grown, so has the number of incarcerated pregnant women, which is currently estimated at 4% or 5%, although comprehensive federal data on this population is lacking.² Women in prison face a heightened risk of maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, and a recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report found significant gaps in care that could explain why.³ ⁴ These gaps disproportionately affect Black women, who in 2023 were imprisoned at 1.6 times the rate of white women.⁵

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act** provides funding to promote exemplary care for pregnant and postpartum people who are incarcerated. The bill also commissions a comprehensive study to understand the scope of the maternal health crisis among incarcerated people and to make recommendations to prevent maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in American prisons and jails. Finally, the bill ties federal funding for state and local prisons and jails to prohibitions on the use of restraints for incarcerated pregnant people to end the practice of shackling.

BILL SUMMARY

The **Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act** will:

1. Use financial incentives for all state and local prisons and jails to **end the practice of shackling pregnant people.**
2. Provide funding for federal, state, and local prisons and jails to establish programs for pregnant and postpartum women in their facilities, including access to support for **doulas and other perinatal health workers, counseling, reentry assistance, maternal-infant bonding opportunities, and diversionary programs to prevent incarceration for pregnant and postpartum people.**
3. Commission a **comprehensive study on maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among incarcerated people**, with a particular focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes.

For more information or to cosponsor, contact
Momnibus@mail.house.gov