

# Maternal Health for Veterans Act

Representatives Lauren Underwood, Julia Brownley, Gus Bilirakis, and Brian Fitzpatrick

Senator Tammy Duckworth

More Resources:



## BACKGROUND

According to data from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), veterans are at heightened risk for pregnancy-related complications, and those receiving VA-covered maternity care have higher rates of adverse outcomes.<sup>1</sup> To address the unique maternal health risks facing veterans, Representatives Lauren Underwood (IL-14) and Gus Bilirakis (FL-12) introduced the bipartisan and bicameral Protecting Moms Who Served Act, which was signed into law in November 2021 and provided the first-ever authorization of funding for maternity care coordination programs at VA – ensuring that every veteran who receives maternity care through VA receives the world-class care and support they need during and after pregnancy.

With the population of women veterans continuing to grow,<sup>2</sup> the need for sustained investments in VA's maternity care programs is more urgent than ever. The number of deliveries paid for by VA has increased 14-fold since 2000.<sup>3</sup> The bipartisan **Maternal Health for Veterans Act** will reauthorize funding from the Protecting Moms Who Served Act to ensure that VA can continue to meet the growing demand for maternity care services and eliminate maternal mortality, morbidity, and disparities among veterans.

## BILL SUMMARY

The **Maternal Health for Veterans Act** would:

- Authorize \$15 million per year for five fiscal years for VA's maternity care programs.
- Require annual reporting from VA:
  - Describing how the Department is using funding from the legislation to carry out maternity care programs.
  - Providing data on maternal health outcomes for veterans receiving VA care.
  - Making recommendations for further steps to improve maternal health outcomes among veterans, particularly for veterans from demographic groups with elevated rates of maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, maternal health disparities, or other adverse perinatal or childbirth outcomes.

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