

Perinatal Workforce Act

Representative Gwen Moore

Senators Tammy Baldwin and Jeff Merkley

More Resources:



BACKGROUND

One driving force of the U.S. maternal health crisis is a lack of access to maternity care, and to culturally congruent maternity care and support specifically. Over 35% of U.S. counties, 1,104 in total, are “maternity care deserts,” leaving more than 2.3 million women without access to a single birthing facility or obstetric clinician.¹ Women in maternity care deserts are more likely to have chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension than women in counties with full access to maternity care,² putting them at greater risk for pregnancy complications and pregnancy-related death.³

One solution to this glaring shortage is to grow and diversify the perinatal health workforce. The Perinatal Workforce Act makes historic investments to increase the number of maternity care providers and non-clinical perinatal health workers who offer culturally congruent care and support during and after pregnancy.

BILL SUMMARY

The **Perinatal Workforce Act** will:

1. Require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to (1) provide guidance to states on the promotion of racially, ethnically, and professionally **diverse maternity care teams** and (2) study how **culturally congruent maternity care** promotes better outcomes for moms, especially in communities of color.
2. Provide funding to **establish and scale programs that will grow and diversify the maternal health clinical and non-clinical workforce**, increasing the number of nurses, midwives, physician assistants, doulas, and other perinatal health workers who moms can trust throughout their pregnancies, labor and delivery, and the postpartum period.
3. Study the **barriers that prevent women – particularly from underserved communities – from entering maternity care professions** and receiving equitable compensation.

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