



April 19, 2018

The Honorable Jamie Butler Herrera
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ryan Costello
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Butler-Herrera, Costello, and DeGette:

On behalf of the 129,000 members of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), I am writing to express the organization's support for the *Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017* (H.R. 1318). We are pleased to support a bill that addresses a vital public health issue because family physicians play an important role in providing pre- and postnatal care for women.

Research indicates that preeclampsia and hypertension are leading causes of maternal mortality and contribute to infant mortality. Despite advances in medicine and public health, America has the highest maternal mortality rate in the developed world. Maternal deaths are more likely to occur among African-American, rural, and low-income women. We know that many of these deaths are preventable, but more can be done to understand why the nation's maternal mortality rates spiked in every state and increased nationally by 26.6 percent from 2000 to 2014.

HR 1318 would establish or support state maternal mortality review committees to examine the causes of pregnancy-related deaths and identify the best strategies for improving pregnancy health outcomes. The data collected from these activities will be shared with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Again, we are pleased to support this legislation. For more information, please contact Sonya Clay, Government Relations Representative, at 202-232-9033 or sclay@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

John Meigs, Jr., MD, FAFPP
Board Chair

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