

September 29, 2020

Rep. Rena Moran
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
575 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155



Rep. Ruth Richardson
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
403 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Moran and Representative Richardson:

The Minnesota Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is writing to thank you for the educational and thoughtful discussion during the Select Committee on Racial Justice hearing on September 22nd. We were thrilled that issues related to maternal health were a part of the agenda because as providers for both mothers and babies, we believe implicit bias within the medical community has led to a women's health crisis.

As Dr. Rachel Hardeman explained in her presentation, the U.S. maternal mortality rate in 2018 was 17 per 100,000 live births, which is the highest of any similarly wealthy industrialized nation. The rate is even more frightening for non-Hispanic black women at 37 per 100,000 live births. The majority of these deaths are occurring in the postpartum period, up to 365 days after the birth of the baby. As you know, mothers who qualify for Medicaid solely based on the pregnancy, lose coverage at 60 days postpartum. This creates a gap in coverage that can have significant negative health outcomes for postpartum women. Federal statute already covers a baby born to a mother on Medicaid through the first year of life. ACOG believes that mothers and their babies deserve the same access to care and that closing this critical gap in coverage can mean the difference between life and death for some women.

ACOG is working nationally with their state chapters to push for Medicaid coverage to extend from 60 days postpartum to 12 months and we will continue this advocacy in the coming legislative session. Last year, ACOG worked with Rep. Kelly Morrison (ACOG member) and you both to introduce HF3892 which would have moved mothers to MinnesotaCare after 60-days postpartum and continue health coverage to 12-months postpartum with no cost sharing. With the last legislative session shifting to COVID-19 issues, we hope to continue this advocacy work with you both in coming months and pass legislation during the upcoming legislative session.

ACOG members are dedicated to the improvement of women's health. As an association, we recognize racism as a social determinant of health; it is a public health and women's health crisis. We thank you for your leadership in co-chairing the Select Committee on Racial Justice and offer up our members to help you both in any way we can.

You can reach our contract lobbyist, Tara Erickson, at Tara@tgeconsultingmn.com or 612-280-8998. Thank you for your commitment and dedication and we look forward to continuing this discussion.

Sincerely,

ACOG MN Legislative Committee

Alessandra Ainsworth, MD
Amy Schumer, MD
Anousheh Shafa, MD
Beth Bard-Henke, MD
Beth Elfstrand, MD
Bridget Keller, MD
Cara Clure, MD
Carrie Terrell, MD
Christy Boraas, MD, MPH
Jessica Greenblatt, MD

Jessika Ralph, MD
Cresta Jones, MD
Danielle Westenberg, MD
Elizabeth Slagle, MD
Erin Stevens, MD
Kathryn G. Flory, MD
Lisa Mattson, MD
Maggie Saccomano, MD
Maren Flynn, MD

Sally Zanotto, MD
Sharon Kim, MD
Siri Fiebiger, MD, MPH
Todd Stanhope, MD
Charles Lais, MD