31st National Black Nurses' Day on Capitol Hill
Theme: "Addressing the Epidemic of Health Inequity: NBNA's Call to Action"

Maternal Mortality

The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) supports comprehensive efforts to reduce the rates of maternal mortality and its devastating effects. NBNA calls on the 116th Congress to address maternal mortality as a major leading public health issue that negatively impacts the health and well-being of all communities. Moreover, maternal mortality disproportionately impacts the physical, mental and social well-being of Black communities in comparison to other communities and this is especially concerning. NBNA supports the *Maternal Care Access and Reducing Emergencies (CARE) Act* **S.3363**, a bill to reduce the racial disparities in maternal mortality and morbidity introduced by U.S. Senator Kamala D. Harris in August 2018.

Background

The United States has the worst rates of maternal mortality in the developed world.
- More American women are dying of pregnancy-related complications than any other developed country. Only in the U.S. has the rate of women who die been rising.
- Deaths are disproportionately worst among women of color with 40 deaths per 100,000 live births for **Black women**, compared to 12.4 deaths per 100,000 live births for White women and 17.8 deaths per 100,00 live births for women of other racial groups. [1]
- Approximately 700 women die each year in the USA, as a result of pregnancy or delivery complications; and an additional 50,000 are severely injured. [2]
- CDC data shows that Black women's risks of death from pregnancy-related causes is **3-4** times higher than white women; and twice as likely to suffer life-threatening complications. [3]
- The US rate has increased by 26.6 percent between year 2000 and 2014. [4]

Recommendations to Legislators

- **Support and co-sign the *Maternal CARE Act S.3363***
  This act would create two new Grant Programs focused on reducing racial health disparities in maternal health; and will provide culturally competent holistic care.
  - **Implicit Bias Training Grants** to address bias in judgement or behavior resulting from implicit attitudes and stereotypes; establishing grants for training health professionals in medical/nursing school programs (priority for OB/GYN).
  - **Pregnancy Medical Home Demonstration Project** to establish a demonstration project assisting up to 10 states with implementing and sustaining pregnancy medical home (PMH) programs to incentivize maternal health care providers to deliver integrated health care services.
  - Support the appropriation of $30 million dollars for *S.3363*

- **Direct the National Academy of Medicine to** study and make recommendations for incorporating bias recognition in clinical skills testing for all nursing and medical schools training the next generation of women health providers.

- Support efforts to increase the percentage of federal and state funding of block grants for "maternal and child health" that actually go to the health of mothers.

References

1. *Here's How Kamala Harris' New Bill Would Address the Racial Gap in Maternal Deaths* (2018). Retrieved from https://rewire.news/article/2018/08/29/heres-how-kamala-harris-new-bill-would-address-the-racial-gap-in-maternal-deaths/

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). *Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System.*

   Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). *Pregnancy-Related Deaths.*

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4. 115TH CONGRESS 2D SESSION (2018). Retrieved from https://www.harris.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ERN18510.pdf