



Durbin Statement On Gao Report Underscoring Need To Address Maternal Mortality Crisis

April 8 2020 10:04 AM

SPRINGFIELD – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today released the following statement regarding a [new report](#) from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on maternal mortality, which describes how maternal deaths are tracked, trends and disparities in mortality data, and how federal funding is being used to reduce pregnancy-related deaths. Durbin, along with Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and 10 other Senate Democrats, [requested](#) the report in 2018 to determine how effectively federal investments were being used and what improvements could be made to promote maternal health and reduce racial disparities.

Last year, Durbin, along with Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Robin Kelly (D-IL-02), introduced the bicameral [Mothers and Offspring Mortality and Morbidity Awareness \(MOMMA\) Act](#). The legislation seeks to reduce America's rising maternal and infant mortality rate, especially for moms and babies of color who are significantly more likely to die during or shortly after pregnancy.

“No nation as rich and advanced as the United States should have new moms and infants—especially women and babies of color—dying at the rates we are currently seeing. It is a national tragedy,” Durbin said. “Many of these deaths could have been prevented with the right interventions and health care. That’s why I will continue to push for passage of the *MOMMA Act* and help provide more comprehensive and culturally competent maternal and postpartum health care for all women and babies.”

The GAO report found that according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 6,700 women died of causes related to or aggravated by their pregnancy between 2007 and 2016. Rates are far higher for some communities of color, with non-Hispanic black women more than three times as likely to die than non-Hispanic white women. The report also advances understanding of how the CDC

monitors these deaths and which Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs are available and being used by states to address this crisis.

The full text of the report, “Maternal Mortality: Trends in Pregnancy-Related Deaths and Federal Efforts to Reduce Them,” can be found [here](#).