

Senate Bill 65

Momnibus- Preventing Maternal & Infant Deaths

Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley)

THIS BILL

California is failing birthing moms and babies – particularly those of color. More birthing people and babies die in the U.S. than in most other high-income countries– and many of these deaths are preventable.

SB 65 takes a comprehensive approach to improving outcomes for birthing parents and babies by closing racial disparities in maternal and infant death and near-death. It accomplishes this by requiring medical investigations into maternal and child death and near-death, improving data collection and research on socio-economic factors that contribute to negative birth outcomes, expanding postpartum health care for parents and babies, and improving access to health options like doulas and midwives which have been proven to improve birthing outcomes.

ISSUE

Currently, the U.S. is ranked 33 out of 36 OECD countries OECD, with an average of 5.7 deaths per 1000 live births. Although California has reduced the rates of maternal mortality over the past 30 years, mortality and morbidity for Black and Indigenous pregnant and birthing people and babies remain considerably higher than the State's average. Higher numbers of Black, Asian and AAPI people report unfair treatment, harsh language, and rough handling during their labor/delivery hospital stay, as compared to their white counterparts during and after pregnancy.

Between 2011 and 2013, the death rate for black women in California was almost 3.8 times higher than white women during pregnancy and childbirth, and black babies were 2 times more likely to die in infancy than white babies were.

Unsurprisingly, research points to structural racism, as well as socio-economic factors that contribute to the racial and geographic disparities seen in birthing outcomes of people of color.

Former Senator Holly J. Mitchell led an effort to prevent black maternal & infant deaths by championing legislation that required hospitals and

alternative birth centers to implement an implicit bias program for all providers involved in the perinatal care of patients. That legislation also required the Department of Public Health (DPH) to track and publish data on maternal death and severe morbidity. SB 65 builds on the provisions of that law to improve racial equity in birthing outcomes, and to provide additional proven healthcare support to all birthing people.

SOLUTION

SB 65 supports maternal health and newborns and brings more equity to birthing outcomes by:

1. Codifying and expanding California's Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review Committee to investigate maternal mortality and morbidity and make recommendations on best practices to reduce maternal and infant deaths.
2. Requiring Medi-Cal to provide full-spectrum doula care to all people who are pregnant or within 12 months postpartum.
3. Providing CalWORKs support to low-income pregnant people starting as soon as they are pregnant and higher monthly stipends beginning at 6 months of pregnancy and continuing until a child is 2 years old.
4. Building the midwifery workforce by providing funding for training programs that meet the priorities of admitting underrepresented groups and those from underserved communities.
5. Updating data collection and protocols for counties participating in the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Process.
6. Providing guaranteed income for pregnant people in participating counties via the CalGIPPPI Pilot program and collecting data on the impact that additional income has on pregnant people in those counties.

SUPPORT

Access Reproductive Justice
American Civil Liberties Union Imperial County
American Civil Liberties Union Northern California
American Civil Liberties Union San Diego
American Civil Liberties Union Southern California
Anthem Blue Cross
Black Women for Wellness Action Project
(Sponsor)
Breastfeed LA
Breastfeed LA
Business & Professional Women of Nevada
County
California Commission on the Status of Women
and Girls
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California League of Conservation Voters
California Nurse Midwives Association (Sponsor)
California WIC Association
California Women's Law Center
Children Now
Children Now
Children's Defense Fund-California
Children's Specialty Care Coalition
Citizens for Choice
Coalition of 100 Black Women, Los Angeles
Chapter
Coalition of California Welfare Rights
Organizations
Community Health Councils
Consumer Watchdog
Courage California
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Essential Access Health
Every Mother Counts
Fund Her
Health Access California
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's
Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible Beach Cities,
LA Bet Babies Network
Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office
March of Dimes
Maternal and Child Health Access
Mt. Diablo Doula Community
NARAL Pro-Choice California (Sponsor)
National Association of Social Workers, California
Chapter
National Center for Youth Law
National Health Law Program (Sponsor)
Neighborhood Legal Services Los Angeles
New Voices for Reproductive Justice
Plan C

Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California
Providence St. Joseph Health
Public Law Center
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee
SBCC Thrive LA
South Bay Cares and AIMM CAT
Strength Based Community Change
TEACH (Training in Early Abortion for
Comprehensive Healthcare)
The Birth Equity Advocacy Project
The Birth Workers of Color Collective
The National Action Network Western Regional
Office and Los Angeles Chapter
The Praxis Project
Time for Change Foundation
Western Center on Law and Poverty (Sponsor)
Women's Foundation California (Sponsor)
Young Women's Freedom Center

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