

March 24, 2022

Rep. Ruth Richardson
403 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Representative Richardson,

As the leadership of the Minnesota Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), we strongly support HF4161. This legislation has the potential to reduce racial disparities in maternal mortality and morbidity and provide better outcomes for both mom and baby.

The weeks following birth are a crucial period for a new mother and her baby. It is recommended that all women have contact with their obstetric care provider within the first 3 weeks postpartum with ongoing care as needed. Then, comprehensive postpartum visit no later than 12 weeks postpartum. Reimbursement policies that support postpartum care as an ongoing process, rather than an isolated visit should facilitate a change in postpartum care.

After giving birth mothers may be dealing with complications from childbirth, pain, depression, anxiety, or other medical problems. Providing women access earlier and more frequent postpartum visits can drastically improve the maternal mortality rate. 52% of maternal deaths occur postpartum with 21% of all maternal deaths are between one and six weeks after birth. This burden falls disproportionately on women of color, with black women being three to four times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women.

Timely postpartum care can reduce emergency department visits and hospitalizations. We Recognize the importance of providing quality and ongoing support after birth. Since more than half of maternal deaths occur after birth, thank you for making strengthening postpartum care a priority.

Sincerely,
Siri Fiebiger, MD MPH
Chair, MN ACOG