

November 18, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Walden:

On behalf of the Medicaid Health Plans of America (MHPA), the national trade association representing Medicaid managed care plans, I am writing to express our strong support for H.R.4996, the Helping Medicaid Offer Maternity Services (MOMS) Act of 2019. This bipartisan legislation would create a new state plan option to extend continuous Medicaid and CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Plan) eligibility for 12 months postpartum, a critical step forward in helping to address gaps in maternal and infant health.

MHPA works on behalf of 94-member health plans known as managed care organizations (MCOs) that serve more than 23 million Medicaid beneficiaries in 37 states and Washington, DC. MHPA's members include both for-profit and non-profit, national and regional, as well as single-state health plans that compete in the Medicaid market. Nearly three-quarters of all Medicaid beneficiaries receive health care through MCOs, and our association provides research and advocacy services that support policy solutions to enhance the delivery and coordination of comprehensive, cost-effective, and quality health care for Medicaid beneficiaries.

In the past two decades, the U.S. maternal mortality rate has continually increased, and more than half of pregnancy-related maternal deaths occur after delivery. Further, black women are three to four times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women. While babies born to mothers receiving Medicaid or CHIP coverage are automatically eligible for coverage in 19 states, Medicaid eligibility for mothers ends at 60 days postpartum, which blocks women from access to coverage and care during the critical period post-pregnancy and birth. H.R.4996 would allow states the option of extending Medicaid coverage to 12 months postpartum, which has demonstrated improvements in health outcomes for both moms and babies.

We commend the House Energy and Commerce Committee's consideration of H.R.4996, a bill that would improve maternal and infant health, and reduce uncompensated care. If you have questions on this issue, please direct them to Shannon Attanasio, Vice President, Government Relations and Advocacy (sattanasio@mhcpa.org).

Sincerely,

Shannon Attanasio

Shannon Attanasio
Vice President, Government Relations and Advocacy
MHPA