
FEDERAL POLICY LANDSCAPE – BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH


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The Century Foundation is a progressive, independent think tank that conducts research, develops solutions, and drives policy change to make people's lives better. We pursue economic, racial and gender equity across a number of policy issues. We were founded in 1919 by the progressive business leader Edward Filene.

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

-
- Defining Structural Racism
 - How Does Structural Racism Manifest In Care?
 - U.S. Maternal Health Crisis Is Worsening
 - Racism Drives Poor Maternal Health
 - Reproductive Justice (RJ) Framework
 - Developing Solutions Through RJ
 - Maternal Health Bills Introduced In 116th and 117th Congress
 - Black Maternal Health Omnibus Act
 - Maternal CARE Act
 - Extending Postpartum Medicaid Coverage
 - Actions By The Biden-Harris Administration
 - Further Actions To Advance Black Maternal Health
 - Suggested Readings By Dr. Taylor

STRUCTURAL RACISM

A system where public policies, institutional practices, and cultural representations work to reinforce and perpetuate racial inequity.



HOW DOES STRUCTURAL RACISM MANIFEST IN CARE?

Health provider shortages and lower-quality hospitals concentrated in neighborhoods with majority POC.

Racial bias and stereotyping of POC by health care providers.

Differential treatment practices and management of pain.

Lack of culturally responsive care.

Efforts to undermine or sabotage publicly-funded health insurance programs such as Medicaid.

U.S. MATERNAL HEALTH CRISIS IS WORSENING

Black Women Face **Three Times** the Maternal Mortality Risk as White Women

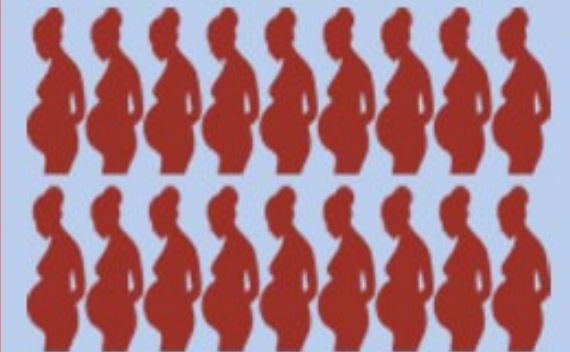
Black mothers: **55**



White mothers: **19**



Hispanic mothers: **18**



*Deaths per 100,000 live births

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2020/maternal-mortality-rates-2020.htm>



RACISM DRIVES POOR MATERNAL HEALTH

- Research suggests that the cumulative stress of racism and gender oppression undermine the health and well-being of Black women
- Fueled by predominantly white power structures that perpetuate power imbalances and lack of empathy and respect for Black birthing people
- Solutions must be grounded in social justice frameworks that are intentionally designed to address these power imbalances

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE (RJ) FRAMEWORK

A human rights-based structured approach that addresses the intersecting systems of oppression that prevent marginalized people, primarily women of color, from achieving complete bodily autonomy and parenting with dignity.



DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS THROUGH RJ

Recognizes a woman's ability to determine her own reproductive destiny

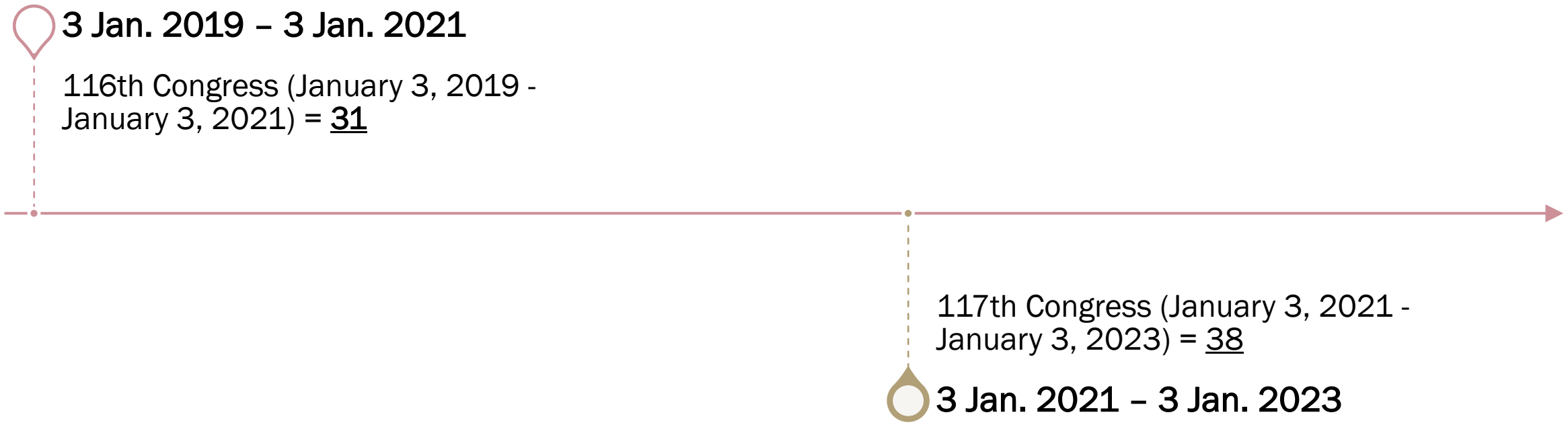
Recognizes reproductive freedom as linked to the conditions within a birthing person's community

Centers women and birthing people of color and their unique experiences

Health outcomes and access to health care are central factors that cannot be isolated from social issues such as economic opportunity, exposure to violence, and safe/affordable housing



HOW MANY MATERNAL HEALTH BILLS INTRODUCED?





BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH MOMNIBUS ACT

- Lead sponsors = Representatives Lauren Underwood (IL) and Alma Adams (NC); Senator Cory Booker (NJ)
- Comprehensive package of 12 bills
- Addresses almost every dimension of the Black maternal health crisis
- Invests in: community-based organizations; SDOH; maternal vaccinations; climate impacts on pregnancy and childbirth; care for veterans and incarcerated birthing people; maternal mental health; and more



MATERNAL CARE ACT

- Lead sponsors = Representative Alma Adams (NC) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (NY)
- Provides funding for implicit bias training
- Tests innovations in integrated health care services for pregnant people through pregnancy medical homes



EXTENDING POSTPARTUM MEDICAID COVERAGE

- American Rescue Plan Act
- Other key legislation
 - Healthy MOMMIES Act
 - MOMMA's Act (not reintroduced in the 117th Congress)
 - Helping MOMS Act (not reintroduced in the 117th Congress)



ACTIONS BY THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION

- Black Maternal Health Week Proclamation
- Approval of Section 1115 waivers to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage
- Increased investments in maternal health through the American Families Plan, the President's budget, and other vehicles
- Focus on implicit bias training, expanding maternity care among rural populations, and addressing racial disparities
- Health care expansions under the American Rescue Plan and health care EO
- Racial equity EO
- Maternal Health Blueprint



FURTHER POLICY ACTION TO ADVANCE MATERNAL HEALTH

- Ensure mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for at least 1 year w/ generous FMAP increase to states
- Implement laws and policies that center the health and social needs of Black women and birthing people
- Invest in anti-racism training for health care providers
- Restore federal right to abortion



SUGGESTED READINGS BY DR. TAYLOR

- *Almost All Pregnancy-Related Deaths Are Preventable, So What Is Congress Waiting For? (TCF)*
- *The Worsening U.S. Maternal Health Crisis In Three Graphs (TCF)*
- *Structural Racism and Maternal Health Among Black Women (Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics)*
- *Promoting Better Maternal Health Outcomes by Closing the Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Gap (TCF)*
- *Reintroduction of the Black Maternal Health Momnibus: Cause for Celebration, Call to Action (TCF)*
- *Tracking Progress of the Black Maternal Health Momnibus (TCF)*





THANK YOU!

