June 14, 2017

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler  The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
1107 Longworth HOB  2426 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515  Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ryan Costello  The Honorable Diana DeGette
326 Cannon HOB  2111 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515  Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Herrera Beutler, Conyers, Costello, and DeGette:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations committed to improving maternal and child health, thank you for your leadership in introducing H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017. This legislation helps states establish or improve their maternal mortality review committees (MMRCs) – interdisciplinary groups of local experts in maternal, infant, and public health – to examine maternal death cases and identify locally relevant ways to prevent future deaths. H.R. 1318 addresses devastating and costly health consequences that threaten the lives of too many moms and their babies in our country today by investing in local solutions that work.

As you know, the United States has some of the worst maternal death rates in the developed world. The U.S. is ranked 47th globally for its maternal mortality rate, and women die every day in the U.S. due to complications from childbirth. Cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of health-related maternal deaths in the United States. Alarmingly, black women are three to four times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related complication in the United States than white women.

Your legislation seeks to mitigate these statistics by supporting state MMRCs and promoting national information-sharing through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) so that states can continue to learn from best practices and collaborate as needed. This bill will also put data to work through demonstration projects to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes.

No mom or baby should ever die from preventable circumstances. The Preventing Maternal Deaths Act takes necessary action by assisting states in developing findings that can inform change, improve health quality, reduce health care costs, and save lives.

We applaud your leadership and stand ready to work with you to achieve passage of H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017. If we can provide any assistance in this effort, please contact Julie Allen at (202) 230-5126 or Julie.allen@dbr.com or Rebecca Nathanson at (202) 314-2322 or rnathanson@acog.org.

Sincerely,

American College of Nurse Midwives
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Psychological Association
Amnesty International USA
Amniotic Fluid Embolism (AFE) Foundation