

House Bill 4133: Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee

The Problem

More women die in the U.S. from pregnancy complications than in any other developed country. In fact, the U.S. is the only industrialized nation with a rising rate of maternal mortality—increasing 26% over the past fifteen years, while the global rate has decreased by almost 50% over the last three decades.ⁱ Rates are even higher among certain populations, including African American women, who are three-four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications,ⁱⁱ and people in rural areas of the U.S., who are 64% more likely. Additionally, severe maternal morbidity during pregnancy and in the postpartum period has increased 75% between 1999-2009, and that trend is expected to increase.ⁱⁱⁱ

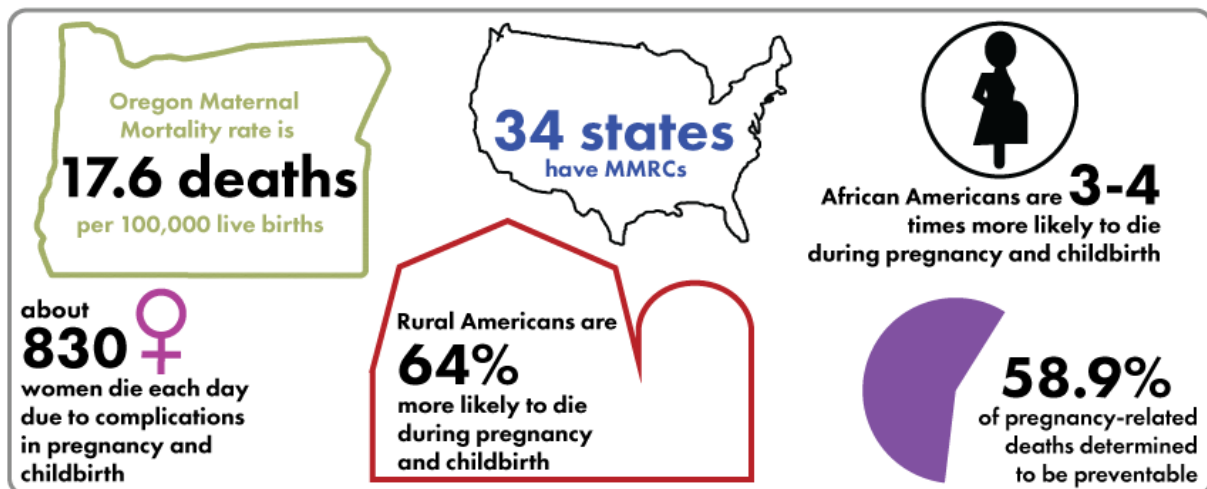
It is suspected that an increase in the number of women with underlying chronic health conditions, coupled with poorly understood racial/ethnic and socioeconomic health disparities, contribute to the increase in maternal death and morbidity. However, the root cause isn't entirely clear. Whatever the cause, it is likely that the majority of these incidents are, at least in part, preventable.

The Solution

House Bill 4133 would create a Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) within the Oregon Health Authority to study and review maternal death cases in Oregon. Consisting of local healthcare providers, public health experts, and community-based organizations, the committee will work together to investigate specific cases, identifying what happened to determine why it happened.

Furthermore, for every incident of maternal death, there are at least 50 cases of severe morbidity, or near misses. HB 4133 would provide flexibility to the committee to, once established, expand focus and review instances of women with short- or long-term health consequences from delivery.

The committee would report regularly on findings with recommendations and protocols for policymakers, providers, and healthcare facilities on how to prevent future deaths and make pregnancies safer. In creating the committee, Oregon would also keep pace with 34 other states with MMRCs already established, as well as seven additional states with proposed legislation.



For more information, contact OMA Government Relations:
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¹ MacDorman MF, Declercq E, Cabral H, Morton C. Is the United States Maternal Mortality Rate Increasing? Disentangling trends from measurement issues Short title: U.S. Maternal Mortality Trends. *Obstetrics and gynecology*. 2016;128(3):447-455. doi:10.1097/AOG.0000000000001556.

² Amnesty International, *Deadly Delivery: The Maternal Health Care Crisis in the USA*, London: Amnesty International, 2010.

³ Callaghan WM, Creanga AA, Kuklina EV. Severe maternal morbidity among delivery and postpartum hospitalizations in the United States. *Obstet Gynecol*. 2012;120(5):1029-1036.

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