



**For Immediate Release**

July 28, 2020

**Contact**

Nell Callahan

[nell@frontwoodstrategies.com](mailto:nell@frontwoodstrategies.com)

202-262-0721

**Senate HEALS Act Falls Short for Moms**

**Washington, DC**--Today, March for Moms released the following statement on the HEALS Act, which was introduced yesterday by Senate Republicans.

“Expanding and adequately funding Medicaid is one of the most important ways that we can support pregnant and birthing people during this incredibly difficult time. This is especially true for Black women and women of color, who are disproportionately and impacted by poor maternal health and COVID-19. Senate Republicans have fallen short of what moms need, and they must amend the HEALS Act to better serve families,” said Katie Shea Barrett, Executive Director of March for Moms.

In addition to the passage of the HEROES Act, the House, led by the Black Maternal Health Caucus, has taken important steps this year to introduce legislation that would extend Medicaid coverage for pregnant and birthing people, expand access to midwives and doulas, and incentivize anti-racist healthcare. While one component of this legislation is advancing through the House, there is more work that remains to be done to improve care for moms. We call on the Senate to work with their counterparts to release a more comprehensive response to the HEROES Act that centers the needs of growing families.

Today, in the United States, Black women are twice as likely as their peers to die in childbirth--a devastating and completely preventable statistic.

Prior to COVID-19, the United States was one of the most dangerous places in the world to give birth. Women of color were twice as likely as their white peers to die in childbirth. Today, as a result of this public health crisis, the healthcare system, states and healthcare providers are closing Labor and Delivery units, restricting labor support and visitation policies, and diminishing outpatient care including prenatal, postnatal, fertility and contraception care. The proposed language in the HEALS Act deters efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and threatens to



create more harm to families and birthing people who were already at risk for poor maternal health outcomes.

For more information, visit [www.marchformoms.org](http://www.marchformoms.org) or follow [@MarchforMoms](https://twitter.com/MarchforMoms) on Twitter.

###

March for Moms is non-partisan, 501 © (3) not-for-profit that aligns the diverse voices of families, health care providers, policymakers, and partners to advocate for mothers and families' health, well-being and equal access to care. For more information, visit <https://marchformoms.org/>.