



March 3, 2017

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler
1107 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
2426 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ryan Costello
326 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
2111 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Herrera Beutler, Congressman Conyers, Congressman Costello, and Congresswoman DeGette:

On behalf of the AFE Foundation and the many families we serve, we are writing to thank you for your leadership and to offer our formal support for the *Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2017*. This important legislation will allow states to address preventable maternal deaths and the devastating and costly health consequences that threaten the lives of too many moms and their babies in our country today. The statistics on maternal death in the United States are staggering - the U.S. is ranked 50th globally for its maternal mortality rate, and the maternal death rate in the U.S. continues to rise.

As you are well aware, the U.S. ranking behind other developed countries in maternal mortality rates, despite major advancements in medical technology and treatments is abysmal. Your legislation is a needed first step forward to assist in the development of robust state maternal mortality review committees. These committees are vital to better understanding the many complications plaguing mothers and their babies and identifying effective and life-saving interventions. Your legislation will support states to establish or advance their mortality review efforts and will promote national information-sharing through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) so that states can continue to learn from each other and collaborate as needed.

Amniotic fluid embolism (AFE) remains a leading cause of maternal and infant death and leaves survivors with severe health consequences. AFE is estimated to affect 1 in every 40,000 deliveries in the United States. Those afflicted by AFE will suffer sudden cardio-respiratory collapse, cardiac arrest, massive blood loss, multi-organ failure, permanent neurological impairment, or death; and in some cases the death of their babies. Despite having been identified for nearly a century, AFE remains poorly understood.

As an executive board member organization for the California Maternal Quality Collaborative (CMQCC) and the Council for Patient Safety in Women's Healthcare, we have been encouraged by the progress of some states, and it is our goal to see your legislation move forward so that

more states can utilize maternal mortality review systems and drastically improve the U.S. statistics on maternal death and disability across the country.

The AFE Foundation is a unique coalition of affected families, respected clinicians, world-renowned researchers, and engaged advocates working together to improve awareness of AFE and prevent maternal death and disability. No mother should be lost or suffer harm bringing life into the world. We stand ready to work with you and your colleagues in Congress to advance this needed legislation.

Please contact Miranda Klassen at 307-363-2337 or Miranda@afesupport.org if we can be of any assistance.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Miranda Klassen".

Miranda Klassen
Executive Director