



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

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Representative Aaron M. Michlewitz
Chair, House Committee on Ways & Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Michlewitz:

I am writing on behalf of the Massachusetts Medical Society to urge a favorable report and passage of H.4448, *An Act to Reduce Racial Disparities in Maternal Health*.

Racial inequities in maternal mortality are staggering, with Black women experiencing mortality rates more than three times that of White women, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In Massachusetts, Black women are twice as likely to die from pregnancy or childbirth-related complications. These inequities, the result of systemic racism in health care, are unacceptable and this legislation offers a long overdue opportunity to begin righting this wrong.

The Medical Society believes that health care is a human right and strives for universal access to health care and nondiscrimination in health care settings for all people. This legislation establishes a commission to research and study racial inequities in maternal health outcomes, including both maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, and make policy recommendations to reduce these inequities. The Medical Society believes that to achieve a foundational intent of this bill – racial equity – the commission must feature the voices of Black and Brown communities that have been most impacted by inequities in maternal health outcomes. As such, the bill would be further strengthened by ensuring Black and Brown communities have a majority representation on this commission.

While the racism that has caused these life-threatening disparities in maternal health has perpetuated over generations, our obligation to undo this harm is urgent. Our patients' lives are on the line and now is the time to act. We respectfully urge a favorable report of this legislation, which is a critical step toward eliminating racial disparities in maternal health and remedying a shameful history of racial injustice in health care.

Respectfully,

David A. Rosman, MD, MBA