



July 28, 2025

Senator John C. Velis, Chair
Representative Mindy Domb, Chair
Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02133

Re: H.2208/S.1411, *An Act to establish a perinatal behavioral health care workforce trust fund*

Dear Chair Velis, Chair Domb, and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery,

We are members of the Massachusetts Mind the Gap Coalition, a group of health care organizations, nonprofits, community-based organizations, survivors and other advocates supported by Postpartum Support International's national Mind the Gap initiative, working to improve state policies around Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs). We are submitting this testimony in support of H.2208/S.1411, *An Act to establish a perinatal behavioral health care workforce trust fund*, presented by Representative Brandy Fluker-Reid and Senator Liz Miranda. We urge you to support this legislation and pass it out of committee with a favorable report.

H.2208/S.1411 would expand and diversify the workforce in the realm of maternal and perinatal mental health ("PMH"), a severely under-addressed area of behavioral health, by providing grants for schools or programs offering education and training in PMH. PMH disorders are the most common complication of pregnancy, impacting at least 1 in 5 moms, as well about 10% of dads. Unfortunately, about 75% of those facing these challenges do not receive treatment. Black and Brown mothers are both more likely to experience these mood disorders, and less likely to receive care, than their White counterparts.

Enacting *An Act to establish a perinatal behavioral health care workforce trust fund* is critical to ensuring adequate care and support for all Massachusetts citizens during the perinatal period, especially in historically underserved communities. Among other important steps forward for perinatal health, last summer's omnibus maternal health bill mandated screening for postpartum depression; as more parents facing PMH challenges are identified, it is critical that they receive care from trained professionals. Further, this bill addresses a key component of the state's 2022 Racial Inequities in Maternal Health Commission report to "offer integrated, culturally competent. . . maternal mental health professionals at all stages of the birthing process" and to grow and diversify the perinatal workforce, including the perinatal behavioral health/SUD workforce.

We thank the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery for your consideration and ask that you please report this bill favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

Accompany Doula Care
AllPaths Family Building
Bay State Birth Coalition*
Belle Joie Doula Services
Better Beginnings Birth Services
Boston Children's Hospital
Brazelton Touchpoints Center
Cape and Islands Perinatal Wellness Alliance
Chamber of Mothers
Charlene Fraser, Inc.
The Circle of Vietnamese Parents of Greater Boston
The Cord Foundation
D. Legacy Pace Setters
Daughters of Yahweh Community Outreach*
Dorchester CARES Coalition
The Ellen Story Commission on Postpartum Depression
The EMA Project*
Empty Arms Bereavement Support
FamilyWell Health
Fathers' UpLift
Golden Flor Wellness*
GPS Group Peer Support
Health Care for All
HELD Doula Services
It Takes a Village
Lifeline for Families Center and the Lifeline for Moms Program at UMass Chan Medical School
March of Dimes, Boston/New England Market*
Mass General Brigham

Mass. PPD Fund*
Massachusetts Affiliate of American College of Nurse Midwives
Massachusetts Association for Infant Mental Health (MassAIMH)
Massachusetts Association of Health Plans
Massachusetts Doula Coalition
Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts Medical Society
Massachusetts Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (Mass. ACOG)
Massachusetts Section of the Association of Women's Health, Obstetrics, and Neonatal Nurses (MA AWHONN)
Melanin Mass Moms
MomsRising
Neighborhood Birth Center
North Shore Postpartum Help
Nurses for Black Maternal Health and Equity Organization
Postpartum Support International of Massachusetts
Propa City Community Outreach*
Sacred Birthing Village
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Springfield Community-Based Doula Initiative
Vital Village Networks
Women of Color Health Equity Collective
Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts

*Massachusetts Mind the Gap Coalition Steering Committee Member