

Urgent Need to Improve Maternal Mental Health – Support for S.F. 1085

S.F. 1085 (Mann, Kupec, Boldon, Abeler, Hoffman) will save lives by improving the health of pregnant women, new moms, and their babies. This bill targets 5 key systemic issues in Maternal Mental Health:

- **Establishing maternal mental health programs within health plans**, shifting responsibility away from providers while ensuring comprehensive care and targeting HEDIS measures.
- **Encouraging perinatal mental health screenings** in alignment with **ACOG guidelines**, promoting evidence-based practices without imposing additional burdens on providers.
- **Requiring full reimbursement for maternal mental health services**, including screenings, diagnosis, and treatment coordination, reducing financial and administrative barriers.
- **Expanding access to trained perinatal mental health specialists**, ensuring timely care and better support for families.
- **Applying these provisions across managed care and county-based purchasing plans**, promoting consistency in maternal mental health coverage statewide.

Maternal mental health disorders are the leading cause of death among pregnant and postpartum women, with **suicide and overdose** as the primary drivers. The U.S. has the highest maternal mortality rate among developed nations, with the economic burden of untreated maternal mental health conditions reaching **\$14 billion**, or approximately **\$31,800 per mother-child pair receiving care**. An estimated 75% of women impacted by a maternal mental health disorder do not receive the treatment they need.

Failing to provide needed mental health care contributes to the rising cost of health care, especially in our public programs like Medical Assistance. One in five babies born in Minnesota live in households with incomes below the federal poverty line, placing them at economic disadvantage. Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, and multi-race communities are at high risk for developing a maternal mental health crisis and have a lower rate of obtaining treatment due to barriers. Maternal mental health diagnosis afflicts women in all demographics and locations in Minnesota. All pregnant women and new moms are at risk.

Maternal Mental Health Coalition Members

