



Senator Melissa Wiklund  
Health & Human Services Committee  
Minnesota Senate Building, 1100

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

The Birth Justice Collaborative is writing to request your support of HF35/SF1085, to require health plans in Minnesota to create a maternal mental health program, to support pregnant people during the prenatal and postpartum period. Maternal mental health is an important health indicator that can significantly impact a child's early learning and development.

Maternal mental health challenges are common and may arise during the pregnancy or after the baby is born. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a report that showed **1 in 8 people experience postpartum depression, but over half of those with postpartum depression do not receive treatment.**<sup>1</sup> The data underscores the need for greater investment in the research and assessment of maternal mortality data and the development of targeted strategies and intervention.

Having access to maternal mental health programs, beginning prenatally, supports mothers to have healthy births and to improve the long-term emotional and social development of children.

Please join the Birth Justice Collaborative in supporting HF35/SF1085, to require health plans to support pregnant people in Minnesota, to improve health outcomes and better prevent future pregnancy-associated deaths.

Sincerely,

**The Birth Justice Collaborative**

Akhmiri Sekhr-Ra, Cultural Wellness Center  
Louise Matson, Division of Indian Work  
Rev. Dr. Alika Galloway, Liberty Northside Healing Space  
Ruth Buffalo, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center  
Dr. Antony Stately, Native American Community Clinic  
Makeda Zulu, Urban Research & Outreach-Engagement Center, University of Minnesota

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Disease Control & Prevention: [Postpartum Depressive Symptoms and Provider Discussions About Perinatal Depression—United States, 2018.](#)



