

Jan. 24, 2024

Chair Moses, Vice Chair Rozar, and Members of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long-Term Care

Honorable Representative Moses:

### Extend Postpartum Coverage to 12 Months to Save Lives and Improve Health Outcomes

Raising Wisconsin – a multi-sector coalition working to ensure every family with young children has the resources they need to thrive – urges you, as the committee chair, to schedule a public hearing for AB 114, which would extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12 months. This measure has overwhelming bipartisan support and would be a critical step in addressing Wisconsin's maternal mortality crisis.

#### Why Extending Postpartum Coverage is Essential

- **It would help to save lives.** 73 percent of pregnancy-related deaths occur postpartum. In Wisconsin, Black women are five times more likely to experience a pregnancy-related death than White women, extending postpartum coverage as a crucial step to addressing our maternal health crisis. Extending postpartum coverage would ensure that new mothers have access to the care they need to stay healthy, including mental health care.
- **It would improve maternal health outcomes.** New mothers are at risk for several serious health conditions, including postpartum depression, hemorrhage, and cardiomyopathy. Extending postpartum coverage would ensure that they have access to the care they need to manage these conditions.
- **It would improve infant health outcomes.** Babies are more likely to stay on their well-child visit schedule when their parents have the same duration of health care coverage. Extending postpartum coverage would help to ensure that babies receive the preventive care they need to stay healthy.
- **It would reduce health care costs.** Uninterrupted health care coverage can help to prevent costly emergency department visits and hospitalizations.
- **It would be an investment in the future of our state. By giving new mothers the support they need to stay healthy, we can help to ensure that our children have a healthy start in life.**
- **It is a common-sense policy that has been implemented or approved in 46 other states.** Our Wisconsin Department of Health Services can only legally provide 60 days' postpartum care without legislative action.

Extending postpartum coverage is a moral imperative. We have a duty to do everything we can to protect the health of our mothers and babies. We urge you to schedule a public hearing for AB 114 so that the committee can hear from the people of Wisconsin about the importance of extending postpartum coverage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

The Raising Wisconsin Coalition

First Five Fox Valley  
Kids Forward  
Milwaukee Succeeds  
Penfield Children's Center  
Reach Out and Read  
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative  
Supporting Families Together Association

The National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership  
and Child First  
United Way of Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health  
Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association  
Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association  
Wisconsin Head Start Association