

September \_\_\_, 2022

The Honorable Bob Casey  
United States Senator  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey,

Our organizations are writing to thank you for championing the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and to urge you to work with Senate leaders to schedule a final vote in September for this urgent legislation.

As you know, Pennsylvania is a dangerous place for pregnant people. A report from the Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review Committee revealed that the number of Pennsylvanians suffering preventable pregnancy-related injury and death rose 21.4% between 2013 and 2018, the last five-year snapshot of relevant data.

Like national statistics, Pennsylvania's maternal mortality and morbidity are severely stratified by race. Black women accounted for only 14% of the births in Pennsylvania between 2013 – 2018 but represented 23% of the pregnancy-associated deaths during this period. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, three in five maternal deaths are preventable.

Protecting maternal health is a complicated, multifaceted issue that must include addressing pregnancy discrimination by closing longstanding gaps in current law.

Unfortunately, neither the Pennsylvania General Assembly nor the U.S. Congress has passed legislation to address the insidious form of pregnancy discrimination that occurs when employers force pregnant people to choose between protecting their health and keeping their job by denying temporary, reasonable workplace accommodations.

Meanwhile, in part due to this inaction, pregnancy discrimination complaints are [rising in Pennsylvania while decreasing across the country](#) as [most other states](#) have already passed this legislation.

In addition to leading to possible workplace injury, the lack of state and federal workplace accommodations legislation has meant many pregnant Pennsylvanians have fewer ways to avoid unnecessary exposure to COVID-19 throughout the pandemic. (Philadelphia implemented [a local ordinance](#) that provides these protections, and [Pittsburgh](#) passed a similar bill that covers some city workers.)

And so we are turning to you, Senator Casey.

Last May, we were thrilled when the PWFA passed the U.S. House 315 – 101. In August, it quickly [passed out of the U.S. Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee](#), which meant the bill was ready to be scheduled for a full Senate vote and final passage.

But now, another year has passed. Where's the vote? What is holding it up?

It is our understanding that Senate leaders have the ability to bring the bill to the floor at any time and the bill has sufficient votes to pass. The Senate's delay is difficult to comprehend and accept especially since pregnant people need PWFA's protections now more than ever.

You have been one of PWFA's strongest champions from the very beginning and we are grateful for your leadership. We urge you to redouble your efforts in this critical moment. We ask that you work with Senate leaders to ensure that this essential and long overdue legislation goes to the Senate floor in September when we know we have the votes, and not at the end of the year when PWFA could get lost in the lame duck shuffle and perhaps even lose support.

Please do everything you can to bring the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act home now. We're counting on you and stand ready to help you in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

Women's Law Project

1 Hood Power

AAUW Pennsylvania

Abortion Liberation Fund of Pennsylvania

AccessMatters

ACLU of Pennsylvania

Action Together NEPA

Allentown Women's Center, Inc.

American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Pennsylvania chapter

Black Women's Policy Center

Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition

Committee to Protect Health Care

Delaware County Women's Center

Dignity Act Now Collective

Friends Association for the Care & Protection of Children

Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger

Helping Others Maintain Excellence LLC

Inviting and Exciting New Pathway

Just Harvest

Maternal and Family Health Services

Maternity Care Coalition

Momsrising Together

National Council of Jewish Women

National Organization for Women, Pennsylvania Chapter

New Voices for Reproductive Justice

One Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Philadelphia Women's Center

Philly CLUW Coalition of Labor Union Women

Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania

Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania Advocates

Sisters Returning Home

The 99% Pennsylvania

The Fund for Women and Girls

The People's Paper Co-op

The Philadelphia Reentry Think Tank

The Restaurant Opportunities Center of Pennsylvania

Unitarian Universalist Justice PA

Sherry Blumenthal, MD

Jamila W. Harris, Certified Recovery & Forensics Peer Specialist

PA State Senator, Amanda Cappelletti, District 17

PA State Representative, Morgan Cephas, District 192

PA State Representative Mary Jo Daley, District 148

PA State Senator Judy Schwank, District 11

Joanne Tosti-Vasey, Ph.D., Bellefonte Borough Council Member & former president, PA NOW