Racism, not race, is killing Black, Brown, and Indigenous people in our maternity care system.

In the United States, women are more likely to die from complications of pregnancy and birth than in 54 other high-resource countries, and most of these deaths are preventable. For the first time, a woman is twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related complications as her mother was a generation ago. This burden is not equally shared.

For Black, Brown, and Indigenous people, childbirth in the U.S. is often not the joyful experience that we all deserve. Black and Indigenous women are two to three times more likely than white women to die from complications of pregnancy and birth and are also more likely to experience near misses or severe complications. One in three people of color giving birth in a hospital report experiencing disrespectful care or mistreatment.

Too often, Black, Brown, and Indigenous people are denied equal access to respectful, high-quality maternity care that is free from bias and discrimination. In maternal care units across the country, they are treated with condescension, disregard, neglect, and fear-based coercion. When asserting their rights to informed consent, bodily autonomy, and self-determination, they are subjected to surveillance and policing under the systems of structural racism that discriminate, control, and criminalize.

For Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, we can’t talk about childbirth equity without also talking about state-sanctioned violence and police brutality. These injustices that started at birth took the lives of Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, George Floyd, Shantel Davis, Tony McDade, Nina Pop, Breonna Taylor, as well as Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, George Floyd, Shantel Davis, Tony McDade, Nina Pop, Breonna Taylor,及びTamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, George Floyd, Shantel Davis, Tony McDade, Nina Pop, Breonna Taylor, 桃里礼婚, ブレオンナ・テイラー, タミール・ライス, ブレオンナ・テイラー, and many other Black people who were victims of medical racism in the maternal health care system. That’s why Birth Justice Matters.

We need a systemic change that is grounded in reproductive justice and promotes an anti-racist model of health care. This begins with:

1. Passing the Black Maternal Health Monomibus Act (H.R. 6142/S.3424) in Congress which includes:
   • Investing in the social determinants of health, like housing, transportation, child care, and nutrition.
   • Funding community-based and community birth organizations working to improve maternal health outcomes for Black and Indigenous women.
   • Growing, diversifying, and strengthening the perinatal workforce to ensure that all people can receive maternity care and support from people they trust.
   • Implementing education on bias, racism, and discrimination for providers in maternity care settings.
   • Promoting innovative payment models to incentivize high-quality maternity care and continuous insurance coverage for pregnant and postpartum people.
   • Advancing legislative proposals, like the BREATHE Act, recently unveiled by the Movement for Black Lives, Congresswoman Pressley, and Congresswoman Talia, to diversify from the system of over-policing Black, Brown, and Indigenous people and instead invest in new approaches to maintain safe and sustainable communities for all people.
   • Providing legal guarantees to respectful, non-discriminatory maternity care and transparent mechanisms that hold health systems and government accountable for incidents of obstetric violence, birthroot, and human rights violations in childbirth.
   • Redirecting resources to amplify, promote, and implement solutions developed by Black, Brown, and Indigenous leaders addressing maternal health disparities, including protecting and supporting Black and Indigenous birth workers who are effectively serving their communities including midwives and doulas.
   • Transforming training requirements for all health professionals to deliver anti-racist, culturally humble care rooted in human rights.

As leaders, organizations, and allies in the birth and reproductive justice movements, we call for institutional and governmental accountability for birth justice and legal guarantees for safe, respectful, anti-racist, andtransformative care. It is time to show to the world that birth justice matters. 

WHAT CAN YOU DO?
Visit birthjusticenow.org for actions you can take.

Call on Congress to pass the Black Maternal Health Monomibus Act and introduce the BREATHE Act.

Sign-on and add your voice to these calls to action.

PAID FOR BY EVERY MOTHER COUNTS