



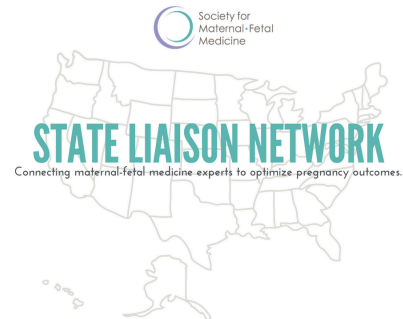
THE NETWORK NEWSLETTER



A Health Policy and Advocacy Update - December 2022

Thank you for your participation in the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine's **State Liaison Network (SLN)**. Our quarterly newsletter brings you the latest advocacy, policy, and public health updates, happenings, and actions from the Society.

In this issue, we cover how our members have taken action to support abortion access; state and federal updates; action opportunities and SLN events; and external materials to read, including tools from our partners.



SLN IN ACTION



[Check out our interactive state advocacy map to see how SMFM staff and members have advocated in the states over the last 12 months.](#)

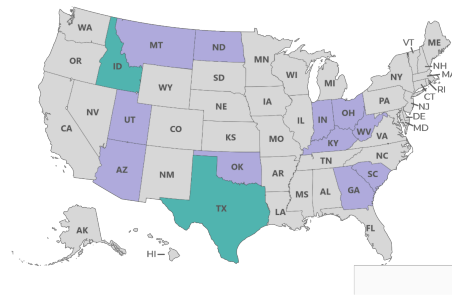
Have you been advocating for reproductive and perinatal health in your state? Share your work with SMFM by emailing Samantha Berg, Manager, State Advocacy (sberg@smfm.org).

If you need assistance with advocacy or a public health initiative, please fill out this short [support-request form](#). We can help you with letter writing, testimony, or any other requests.

OTHER SMFM ACTIONS AND UPDATES

SMFM continues to submit friend of the court briefs to protect access to health care services critical to our mission

SMFM joined partnering organizations to file [amicus briefs](#) opposing abortion bans in **Kentucky, Indiana, North Dakota, and Oklahoma**.



In addition, SMFM joined the American Medical Association and other medical societies in a brief for a case that threatens access to no-cost preventive health services, including gestational diabetes screening, folic acid supplements, and more. The brief explains why it is critical that health plans continue to offer preventive health services without cost-sharing.

SMFM'S judicial advocacy leads to the release of Texas' 2022 Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) Report

Last week, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) released the 2022 MMMRC joint report containing findings from 2019 and recommendations for addressing Texas' maternal health crisis. This comes three months after the state's statutory deadline for release, as well as DSHS' announcement on September 2 that the report would not be released until next summer.

We believe last week's release is a direct result of pressure from Texas-based advocates, state lawmakers, and health care professionals, including SMFM and our partners at Democracy Forward. We are deeply grateful to the members of the MMMRC, in particular the MFMs – Drs. Carey Eppes, James Hill, and Patrick Ramsey.

While we celebrate this victory, we also recognize that our advocacy does not stop here. SMFM will use this report to inform our advocacy in Texas and will also demand better from other states who do not adequately support their committees.

HPAC finalizes 2023-2024 Advocacy Agenda

SMFM's Advocacy Agenda provides both the direction and the guardrails for SMFM's advocacy activities at every level of government. This fall, SMFM's Health Policy & Advocacy Committee (HPAC) reviewed and made updates to the agenda to reflect new data and emerging issues.

Overarching priorities in the year ahead include: 1) prioritizing and strengthening research investments in pregnant and lactating people, 2) expanding and better supporting public health and health service programs that facilitate improved perinatal health outcomes, 3) ensuring that high-risk pregnant people have access to MFMs and MFM services, and that MFMs are included in innovative care delivery models, and 4) defending and expanding access to reproductive health care. The 2023 – 2024 Advocacy Agenda can be viewed [here](#).

STATE HAPPENINGS

Celebrating abortion access wins

At the end of September, Governor Newsom of **California** signed an historic legislative package sponsored by the California Future of Abortion Council (CA FAB Council). The package consisted of 13 bills protecting abortion and reproductive health, including \$200 million for reproductive health care services and outreach. You can read more about this package and other policies protecting abortion access in California in the CA FAB Council's [latest report](#).

In November, we saw five major wins for abortion-related ballot measures – **California**, **Michigan**, and **Vermont** all voted to enshrine the right to abortion into their respective state

constitutions; **Kentucky** rejected a measure that would have explicitly said abortion is not a constitutional right; and **Montana** rejected a measure that would have criminalized compassionate and spiritual care for infants and families facing pregnancy complications and lethal fetal conditions.

Monitoring abortion bans

18 states have abortion bans up to 20 weeks gestation currently or soon to be in effect: **Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia,** and **Wisconsin**.

13 of these states (**Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia,** and **Wisconsin**) have total bans.

In 10 states, courts are determining if existing or new bans can take effect: **Arizona, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Utah,** and **Wyoming**.

For up to date information on state abortion policies, see resources from [Abortion Finder](#), [Guttmacher Institute](#), and the [New York Times](#).

FEDERAL HAPPENINGS

Congress poised to make postpartum Medicaid extension permanent, but fails to make the policy mandatory for all states

Congress will vote this week on a year-end legislative package that will fund the government for the remainder of FY 2023 and finalize a number of outstanding policy issues before the new Congressional session begins next month. The legislation includes a provision that would make the state option to extend postpartum Medicaid permanent. The current policy, which allows states to provide a full year of postpartum Medicaid coverage to new mothers, is set to expire in 2027.

Unfortunately, Congress failed to also include a provision that would have required all states to provide 12 months of postpartum coverage. As a result, Medicaid coverage for new mothers in 24 states will end just 60 days after giving birth, leaving them without health insurance during a critical window for maternal health. SMFM will continue to push for a nationwide policy in the 118th Congress.

New legislation introduced to encourage the inclusion of pregnant and lactating people in clinical trials

Last week, Representatives Kathy Castor (D-FL), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Lauren Underwood (D-IL) introduced H.R. 9487, the Advancing Safe Medications for Moms and Babies Act of 2022. This bipartisan bill will build upon prior legislation to better our understanding of the effect of medications on pregnant and lactating women and their infants. By updating FDA regulations, establishing a national clearinghouse of educational materials, creating a coordinating committee of federal activities, and raising awareness for patients and providers, this legislation will help ensure that moms and babies stay safe and healthy.

The legislation is part of SMFM's long-time advocacy effort to ensure that pregnant people are protected through research rather than from it. A section-by-section of the bill can be found [here](#).

TAKE ACTION

Legal Support

Do you need legal support related to abortion restrictions in your state? Contact the Reproductive Health Project at RHProject@smfm.org to learn more about available resources.

SLN EVENTS

SLN @ the Annual Meeting

It's hard to believe that the [43rd Annual Meeting](#) is only a few months away! Held on February 6-11 in San Francisco, this meeting presents an excellent opportunity to learn from leaders in the field of maternal-fetal medicine and connect with colleagues from around the world – including your fellow State Liaisons!

We hope you'll join us on Tuesday, February 7, for our **State Liaison Network-ing Event: MFMs Leading State Initiatives and Advocacy to Optimize Pregnancy Outcomes**. You'll have a chance to connect with your colleagues, hear from staff and others on their advocacy experience, and more!

Quarterly SLN Webinar

On December 13, we hosted the webinar, ***Clinicians as Advocates: Preparing for 2023 State Legislative Sessions***.

During this webinar, guest speaker Elizabeth Nash from the Guttmacher Institute reviewed the current state of abortion access and what to expect from 2023 state legislative sessions. We then discussed opportunities for clinicians to advocate for abortion access in their states.



[You can watch a recording of the webinar here.](#)

PARTNER RESOURCES

Brennan Center and Center for Reproductive Rights: [State Court Abortion Litigation Tracker](#)

Center for Reproductive Rights: [2022 State Legislative Wrap-up](#)

Commonwealth Fund: [The U.S. Maternal Health Divide: The Limited Maternal Health Services and Worse Outcomes of States Proposing New Abortion Restrictions](#)

National Institute for Reproductive Health: [Meeting the Moment Post-Dobbs: A Review of Proactive Abortion Policies Passed in States & Localities, June 24-October 1, 2022](#)

Society of Family Planning: [#WeCount October 2022 Report](#)

WHAT WE'RE READING

[“Abortion Bans Are Making It Harder for Some Cancer Patients to Get Chemotherapy,”](#) *19th News*

["Am I a Felon? The Fall of Roe v. Wade Has Permanently Changed the Doctor-Patient Relationship,"](#) *TIME*

["The doctors leaving anti-abortion states: 'I couldn't do my job at all,'"](#) *The Guardian*

["Doctors Struggle With Navigating Abortion Bans in Medical Emergencies,"](#) *The Wall Street Journal*

["'Heartbreaking' stories go untold, doctors say, as employers 'muzzle' them in wake of abortion ruling,"](#) *CNN*

["I'm a doctor: The law shouldn't force me to hurt my patients this way,"](#) *CNN*

["Focusing on 'Exceptions' Misses the True Harm of Abortion Bans,"](#) *Ms. Magazine*

["Pregnancy complications spiked during the pandemic. No one knows exactly why,"](#) *The Washington Post*

Please share any feedback or items for future newsletters directly with Samantha Berg, SMFM's State Advocacy Manager (sberg@smfm.org).

You are receiving this newsletter because you are a member of SMFM's State Liaison Network. If you'd no longer like to receive these communications, please unsubscribe below. If you'd prefer to no longer be a member of the Network, please email Anna Hall, SMFM's Advocacy and Communications

Coordinator (ahall@smfm.org).

STAY CONNECTED

