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April 22, 2020

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1201 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 900
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Dear Mrs. Ubl, Whitaker and Greenwood:

On behalf of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), we are writing to urge that you support within your industries the inclusion of underrepresented minorities and pregnant women in any clinical research related to COVID-19 vaccine or treatment development. It is critical at this juncture to ensure that the population of the United States is reflected in all research activities, so that we appropriately and adequately address this public health emergency.

Established in 1977, SMFM is the medical professional society for obstetricians who have additional training in the area of high-risk pregnancies. Our members see the sickest patients with the most complicated pregnancies. SMFM supports the clinical practice of maternal-fetal medicine by providing education, promoting research, and engaging in advocacy to optimize the health of high-risk pregnant women and their babies.

Our members are on the front lines of the COVID-19 epidemic and are first-hand witnesses to the health inequities in our country. Not only are Black women three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related complication than white women in the U.S., but early data indicates that the Black community is particularly hard hit by COVID-19, as well. We have urged the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to collect data stratified by race and ethnicity so that researchers and health care clinicians can understand the risk and ensure appropriate treatment, and are now asking that industry work to address these health inequities, as well.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue. Should you have any questions, please contact Kerri Wade at kwade@smfm.org.

Sincerely,

Judette Louis, MD, MPH
President

Matt J. Granato, LLM, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

