

Luján, colleagues introduce legislation to support treatment of pregnant, postpartum women

Written by By Ben Ray Luján New Mexico Senator
Friday, 22 December 2023 06:00



WASHINGTON D.C. — U.S. Senators Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., Tim Scott, R-S.C., Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., and Thom Tillis, R-N.C., introduced the bipartisan Pregnant and Postpartum Women Treatment Reauthorization Act to reauthorize the grant residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women to receive residential treatment for substance use disorder Dec. 8. This legislation will authorize funding to enhance comprehensive substance use disorder treatments, prevention and recovery support, parenting training, mental health counseling, and harm reduction interventions.

Drug overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids like fentanyl, reached record highs in 2020 and 2021, with pregnant women experiencing more overdoses than ever before. The PPW program supports evidence-based parenting and treatment models to reduce substance use among pregnant women. Grant funds to PPW programs aim to ensure access to services for low-income women and combat maternal health disparities.

The Pregnant and Postpartum Women Treatment Reauthorization Act will support public and nonprofit entities that offer PPW programs. Last December, Luján introduced the Improving Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women Act 2.0.

“Improving the health of pregnant women facing substance use disorders is critical to creating positive outcomes for families and lasting health,” Luján said. “By reauthorizing these critical programs, pregnant and postpartum women with substance use disorders can access the necessary tools to prevent health complications and treat substance use - including recovery and rehabilitation. I’m committed to improving families’ health and safety in New Mexico and

Luján, colleagues introduce legislation to support treatment of pregnant, postpartum women

Written by By Ben Ray Luján New Mexico Senator
Friday, 22 December 2023 06:00

across the country.”

Scott said the crisis involving pregnant women and substance abuse should be one of the government’s top priorities.

“I’ve spoken at length of the devastating effects and reach of illicitly-trafficked fentanyl in this country, and its deadly impact on new and expecting mothers is yet another reason that seriously addressing this crisis must be our government’s top national security priority,” he said. “The harsh but heartbreaking truth is the number of skyrocketing fatalities of pregnant and postpartum women represents far more than mere statistics show – these are children left without mothers and families ripped apart. As we fight to secure our border and curb the flow of illicit drugs into this country, we have an obligation to provide essential resources for these new and expecting moms.”

Robert I.L. Morrison, Executive Director, National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, also showed his support for the act.

“On behalf of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, I am writing in support of the Pregnant and Postpartum Women Treatment Reauthorization Act. Thank you for introducing this important legislation. As a result, more pregnant and postpartum women have access to these comprehensive services in outpatient and intensive outpatient settings,” Morrison said. “Again, thank you for introducing the Pregnant and Postpartum Women Treatment Reauthorization Act. We believe this bill will continue to help more pregnant and postpartum women and their families gain access to comprehensive, family-centered substance use disorder services.”

By Ben Ray Luján
New Mexico Senator