DATE

NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE, RIDING

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0A6 / APPROPRIATE ADDRESS

**Re: A Comprehensive Maternal Death Prevention Strategy**

Dear [INSERT NAME OF MP/MPP/MLA/MNA/MHA],

From 2000 to 2021, Statistics Canada reported **508 maternal deaths** (deaths from obstetric causes occurring during pregnancy or within 42 days of delivery or end of pregnancy). The true number of maternal deaths is believed to be higher, but is unknown due to the lack of robust and consistent data on the matter. For example, the ‘Trends in Maternal Mortality’ report by the WHO and other organizations estimated Canada’s 2017 maternal mortality rate to be over 60% higher than that reported by Statistics Canada. The estimate would put Canada’s maternal mortality rate in the top third of countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2017.

In the United Kingdom, maternal deaths have been tracked and investigated by the country's MBRRACE (Mothers and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries) monitoring program since 1952. By investigating maternal deaths and tracking demographic indicators, the program has allowed for a better understanding of how to prevent such tragedies, as well as highlighting the deep-rooted health inequalities at play.

Canada currently lacks similar systems to monitor maternal deaths, and people are suffering as a result. It is difficult for health care providers to fix a problem if they don’t know why, where, or how it exists. I urge the federal government to work with the provinces and territories to **establish a similar program to the UK MBRRACE model to collect and analyze consistent disaggregated and anonymized data about maternal deaths** and close calls, and to share those data in confidential form with relevant groups (e.g., health care providers, policy makers, researchers, advocacy groups, members of the public).

I also urge the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, along with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada and the Canadian Association of Midwives, to work together on a **comprehensive maternal death prevention strategy.** This strategy would promote awareness and best practices among health care providers around risk factors (e.g., age, ethnicity, race, income, mental health issues, housing, education level, access to medical care), and enhance public education of patient populations. With many maternal deaths being preventable, such a strategy is urgently needed to learn from previous failings and address the harmful inequalities that exist in maternal health care provision.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME]