
Mom Congress is a power-building movement empowering mothers from all walks of life to address motherhood's most pressing policy issues



The History

After bringing mothers to capitol hill in 2017 and 2018 to pass critical maternal mental health legislation, the organization 2020 Mom (now called the Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health) saw an opportunity to coordinate with other non-profit organizations on multiple issues facing mothers. In late 2018, the event was rebranded as Mom Congress.

The Movement

Mom Congress aims to address gender equity in policy by growing and training new advocates – mothers who have been marginalized and are caring for our future. After a successful 2019 Mom Congress event, attendees asked how they could go deeper and continue to identify with Mom Congress. We responded by creating a membership option, inviting mothers from all backgrounds across the United States to engage throughout the year in non-profit partner organizations' policy calls to action, educational town halls, congressional briefings, and in an online community.

The Mountains We're Moving

The United States:

- Has the highest (and the only rising) rate of maternal death in the developed world
- Has systems of racism and oppression that harm Black and Brown women
- Is one of only a handful of countries with no paid family leave
- Is the only developed country that spends next to nothing on childcare
- Has a broken and fragmented mental health system, negatively impacting the 20% of mothers with maternal mental health disorders

All of these things contribute to what we call the motherload, the stress that U.S. mothers carry at significant rates which has a lasting negative multigenerational impact on families and further marginalizes Black, Brown, and Rural mothers.

**Mom Congress is non-partisan and bi-partisan.
We are comprised of and work with members of both parties
as maternal-child health and well-being transcends party politics
and affects us all.**

The Moment

Each year, passionate advocates convene to connect with influential change agents, to be inspired, and learn how to drive change in legislative policy on Capitol Hill. In 2023, the Mom Congress Event is being held September 18-19 in DC at The Melrose Hotel and on Capitol Hill. Virtual town halls and bill training will be offered virtually in late August/early September leading up to the in-person event.

Photos of “The Moment”

Below are photos of the 2019 and 2022 in-person events.



First Lady of NJ, Tammy Murphy, and Every Mother Counts Founder, Christy Turlington-Burns Speaking with Delegates on Training & Empowerment (2019)



Congressional Briefing titled “Saving and Supporting Moms” featuring speakers from the CDC, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and more (2019)



Congressional Reception co-hosted by Mom Congress, The Rockefeller Foundation and Every Mother Counts; The Reception drew 20+ members of Congress who shared their commitment to improving birth and health equity (2019)



The CDC sharing the 2022 Vital Statistics maternal mortality report with Mom Congress members and members of Congress, virtually.



Mom Congress attendees in Mom's Agenda bill training (2022)



Convention attendees with members of Congress (2019)



Mom Congress members taking an "in the hall" meeting with a Congressional staffer (2022)



Post visit photo for members to social media (2022)



Mothers from the Southern States celebrating on the Capitol lawn (2022)



The NJ delegation prior to engaging in legislative visits (2022)



Mom Congress staff and volunteer leaders demonstrate the flow of a hill day visit.



Taking a break with fellow delegates. (2022)



Listening to a mother tell her story (2022)



Mothers were asked if they experienced a significant negative birth experience. (2022)



150 delegates gather on the capitol lawn for our eagerly-awaited group photo (2019)



Mom Congress attendees gathering before the Convention kick-off at the opening night Soirée (2019)

The Reach - by the Numbers:

Since 2019, Mom Congress has:

- Held three virtual Town Halls with 8+ prominent speakers & 300+ attendees
- Organized two congressional briefings (one on Capitol Hill and one virtually) with 10+ prominent speakers and 600+ participants
- Held a virtual Hill Day (2021) supporting 40+ advocates in meeting with members of congress
- Supported 150+ individuals to engage in digital legislative action alerts (2021)
- Built a membership network of nearly 300 mothers
- Endorsed over 80 pieces of federal legislation to improve pregnancy support, birth, and motherhood
- Gathered 150 mothers convened in DC at the Inaugural Mom Congress convention in 2019 and nearly 200 in 2022
- Helped pass 5 pieces of legislation and educate critical members of Congress on our core issues

Over 1000 mother engagements with Congress have occurred, and we are only just beginning...

What Event Participants Are Saying

2019 Convention Testimonials:

"This type of engagement is EXACTLY what I've been looking for. I am so excited to continue the advocacy at home. Truly thank you for the hard work, dedication and making a phenomenal, powerful and impactful event."

"After cross country flights, early starts and long emotionally charged days I left feeling absolutely exhausted yet I don't feel depleted, I feel filled up, inspired, thankful and hopeful."

"The collective energy was awesome. The whole process was full of learning for me and lit a fire within me for doing more advocacy work. Loved the Legislative visits and I can't wait to do more! The Congressional briefing where ACOG and CDC shared their work added to the feeling of what we were doing being seen, that improving the broken system of maternal health IS having a spotlight shone on it and things WILL change."

"There is incredible power in bringing all these people together to fight for change!"

2021 Virtual Hill Day Testimonials:

I was inspired knowing that there are so many other women who are fighting for policy and raising their voices for necessary change.

"It was great to feel like I was doing something meaningful. It made me feel important and needed."

"The Action and purpose-driven conversations. I loved hearing from the two speakers on the training day. They were both inspiring."

"Getting to meet with the offices and hopefully make change. Also to get to know the Mom Congress staff better and I really enjoyed the speakers at the training (being able to watch it later if we couldn't attend was perfect!)"

"I loved collaborating with my team and finding ways to bolster one another."

"It was so great having a platform to share my story with my Congressman and State Representative so they can understand the very realness of what mothers go through."

"It felt empowering to share my story in a way that will hopefully lead to positive change."

2022 Convention Testimonials:

"...Things were excellently organized. Everyone on staff was nice and accessible at all times. Almost anything you would need was provided. Experts and real people speaking to the group. So many amazing like minded women (and men) ready to support moms, babies and families."

"I loved the State Advocacy Panel with First Lady of NJ Tammy Murphy; Advocate Alice Lu; TN State Senator London Lamar; Doula and Advocate Chanel Porchia-Albert. It was super powerful to see what changes have already been made."

"Eye opening experiences, finding a sense of community of Moms with lived experiences that are also advocates, speaking to the legislators and building relationships with women that will last a lifetime."

"Observing the announcement at The Capitol of the resolution to officially make Sept 19th National Stillbirth Awareness Day and seeing the Mothers meeting the senator. It was a magical moment."

Membership Testimonials

"I just love Mom Congress. I love that there is a place for me to raise my voice in favor of issues that are important to me, learn more about policy and the legislative process, and just become more involved as a citizen of the US."

"I engage with Mom Congress to hear about the most relevant topics for parenting and politics and where the two intersect."

"I have always felt passionate about advocating for the struggles unique to modern motherhood and until Mom Congress, I did not know how to get started. Mom Congress attaches directions and purpose to my values."

Member Priorities

Policy priority surveys are distributed to Mom Congress members annually. In 2022, members asked Mom Congress leadership to lean into the issue of Child Care. In 2023 members were asked what was the top issue related to Child Care - and not surprisingly, affordability and number/location of child care programs were prioritized by members.

A word cloud of child care priorities. The central and largest word is "CHILD CARE" in pink. Other words include "Healthcare" (blue), "Maternal Mental Health" (green), "Medicaid Expansion" (blue), "Gun Safety" (blue), "Still Birth" (green), "Maternal Health & Mortality" (blue), "Helping refugee children" (blue), "PAID FAMILY LEAVE" (pink), and "Diaper Taxation" (green).

A word cloud of child care priorities. The central and largest word is "Affordability" in pink. Other words include "Proximity" (blue), "Government Subsidy" (blue), "High-Quality Providers" (blue), "ACCESS" (blue), "Child Ratio" (blue), "PAY OF CHILDCARE WORKERS" (blue), and "Career Paths" (red).

Welcoming Ebony Wrenn

With the support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, we have hired our first Mom Congress Program Director, Ebony Wrenn, who started with Mom Congress on August 1, 2022. Ebony is being groomed to serve as Executive Director by our founder, and the Policy Center's Executive Director, Joy Burkhard.



Ebony Wrenn, M.Ed.
Incoming Mom Congress Director



Joy Burkhard, MBA
Founder

The Budget

Mom Congress has a \$300,000 annual budget. Finances are managed by the Policy Center with oversight provided by both a Mom Congress advisory board along with the Policy Center board of directors.

The Next Chapter - Becoming an Independent 501(c)(3)

We have filed 501(c)(3) paperwork for **Mom Congress to become an independent nonprofit organization. Approval is expected in November 2024.** Continued back-office support will be provided on a contract basis by the Policy Center.

Where We Are Headed

We aim to significantly grow our membership to look like the diverse U.S. population, and to grow leadership/visibility on the hill.

Our membership goals are:

- **2,000 in 2 years (2024)**
- **20,000 in 10 years (2032)**

Mom Congress Aims to Become the AARP of Motherhood

Invest in Mom Congress:

With Additional Investments, We Aim to Build Power by:

- **Substantially growing membership** through dedicated outreach through non-profit networks and funders and creating a membership “delegate” infrastructure to align with congressional districts
 - We aim to have two delegates in each of the 435 congressional districts (following the “twin effect,” which recognizes two people are more powerful than one in communicating needs and moving the needle).
 - We will do this through targeted outreach (via a network of funders and non-profit partners), influencer engagement, and social media ads.

(\$155,000 annually)

- **Building Advocacy Capacity**

- By further refining and promoting the annual Mom’s Agenda with Congress and the media.
- Expanding the number of member visits with Congress, Developing and managing an [Advocacy Resource and Action Center](#) anchored around member priorities and the Mom’s Agenda for members and non-members to find and take action year-round, including watching live and recorded workshops on topics like placing local op-eds to influence policy outcomes;
- Engaging with national organizational organizations to build partnerships;
- Writing and releasing issue-based policy briefs
- and increase members knowledge and understanding surrounding Mom Congress Policy Priorities

(\$120,000 annually)

SPONSOR OUR EVENTS:

[Event sponsorship](#) is one way to begin giving and build capacity.

Invest in change – let’s connect to discuss shared interests and synergy:

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