Congress Passes the MMHLA-led *Into the Light Act* in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023

WASHINGTON D.C. (December 23, 2022) – Today, Congress passed S.3824/H.R.7073, the *Into the Light for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Act of 2015*, within the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023*. Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA) celebrates the passage of this crucial legislation to address maternal mental health conditions, which are the most common complications of pregnancy and childbirth, impacting at least 1 in 5 pregnant or postpartum people (800,000 families each year in the United States).

*Into the Light* contains two specific provisions: it reauthorizes grants to states for programs to address maternal mental health, and it authorizes the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline to provide 24/7 voice and text services to individuals and families impacted by maternal mental health conditions. *Into the Light* significantly increases funding for these key programs from $10.5 million in Fiscal Year 2022 to $170 million total in Fiscal Years 2023 to 2028.

MMHLA was honored to have worked with key Members of Congress who championed these lifesaving provisions, including Senators Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), as well as Assistant House Speaker Katherine Clark (D-MA-05) and Representatives Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA-03), Doris Matsui (D-CA-06), Michael Burgess (R-TX-26), Yvette Clarke (D-NY-09), and Young Kim (R-CA-39).

“Maternal mental health conditions are the most common complication of pregnancy and childbirth, and have only been exacerbated by the stress and isolation that has accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY). “Including *Into the Light* in this legislation is incredibly important. It will reauthorize and expand a grant program to screen and treat maternal mental health and substance use disorders, and it will also codify the Maternal Mental Health Hotline, which is a national 24/7 voice and text program that is operated by licensed health care professionals and provides support and resources to pregnant and postpartum women experiencing mental health and substance use disorder challenges.”

“Healthy families begin with healthy moms, and today, we celebrate a major step forward in our work to provide moms the support and resources they need to thrive,” said Assistant Speaker Katherine Clark (D-MA-05). “With the inclusion of the *Into the Light Act* in the annual funding package, we will provide permanent and expanded mental health services to moms...
across the country, including the 24/7 hotline and programs that improve screening and treatment. We are one step closer to ensuring that no mom suffers alone and honoring what we have long known: mental health is health care.”

“Too many women in our country are suffering in silence facing maternal mental health issues alone. Congress is stepping up to help end this crisis with the passage of this bill,” said Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA-03). “I am pleased to have led the Into the Light for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Act along with Congresswoman Katherine Clark and Congresswoman Roybal-Allard. From expanding screenings to solidifying the availability of a 24/7 Maternal Mental Health Hotline, this new law puts in place important resources for pregnant women and new mothers when they are most in need of support.”

MMHLA also celebrates the increase in appropriations for both the state grants and the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline for Fiscal Year 2023. Congress has appropriated $10 million for the state grants to improve screening and treatment for maternal mental health, an increase of $3.5 million above the Fiscal Year 2022 enacted level, and $7 million for the Hotline, an increase of $3 million above the Fiscal Year 2022 level. MMHLA extends appreciation to Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Assistant House Speaker Katherine Clark (D-MA-05), and Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA-03) for their leadership on the appropriations requests.

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA) is a 501(c)3 nonpartisan nonprofit organization whose mission is to advocate for national policies to provide universal, equitable, comprehensive, and compassionate mental health care during pregnancy and the year following pregnancy. Learn more at www.mmhla.org. For more information, contact Lee Taylor-Penn, MMHLA Policy Director, ltaylorpenn@mmhla.org.