



Governor's Advisory Commission on Women

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Moriah Hathaway, Executive Director, women@pa.gov

First Lady Lori Shapiro and the Governor's Advisory Commission on Women Visit Patients R Waiting in Lancaster to Discuss Ways to Improve Maternal and Women's Health

Governor Shapiro's budget includes an addition \$2.6 million to reduce maternal mortality and \$3 million to provide feminine hygiene products in schools at no cost to students.



Lancaster, Pa – Today, **First Lady Lori Shapiro** met with members of the **Governor's Advisory Commission on Women** and visited [Patients R Waiting](#) in Lancaster to learn more about how the organization is addressing the maternal mortality crisis by providing Black and Latina expectant moms with doula support and discuss steps the Commonwealth can take to improve access to women's health care.

Patients R Waiting is focused on increasing the pipeline of minority clinicians and supporting minority clinicians in practice to help eliminate the disparities in care that hold women of color and low-income families back. 1 in 4 students in the United States miss school at some point due to a lack of access to period supplies. In Pennsylvania, Black women are two times more likely to die related to pregnancy and childbirth than white women.

The Shapiro Administration has taken big steps to close the gaps in women's health care that too often hurt low-income families and communities of color. During his first year in office, Governor Josh Shapiro secured \$2.3 million to expand maternal health programming – the first-ever state investment in reducing maternal mortality – and signed Senate Bill 262 to ensure improved access to timely data on maternal health and maternal mortality in Pennsylvania.

In his latest budget, Governor Shapiro has proposed an additional \$2.6 million to continue capacity-building to enhance prenatal care, promote maternal health education, address racial disparities, and strengthen support systems, ensuring that every pregnant woman in Pennsylvania receives the comprehensive care necessary for a safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth. On top of that, the Governor is calling for \$3 million to provide feminine hygiene products in schools at no cost to students.

"Providing period products should not be treated like a luxury. For young girls, they are as much of a necessity as toilet paper," said **First Lady of Pennsylvania Lori Shapiro**. "This funding will help move past antiquated stigma, provide essential health products for students, and reduce the trauma and stress of women and girls who don't currently have access – but do have need – for period products."

"The Governor's Advisory Commission on Women is committed to improving health outcomes for all women and girls in the Commonwealth, which is why we are thrilled with the investments that Governor Shapiro proposed in his budget," said **Moriah Hathaway, Executive Director, Governor's Advisory Commission on Women**. "Commissioners like Dr. Sharee Livingston provide insights on how we can alleviate health disparities and create health systems that value, support, and listen to women and girls."

Pennsylvania's young women and girls deserve peace of mind so they can focus on academic learning, attendance, and health. This is an issue First Lady Shapiro has engaged on directly, [visiting nonprofits](#) that work to ensure girls have access to feminine hygiene products and hearing directly from them about the importance of that access.

“To address health disparities, particularly racial health disparities, we must address the contributing factors that allow them to exist,” said **Dr. Sharee Livingston, Founding Board Member, Patients R Waiting**. “At Patients R Waiting, we aim to increase diversity in medicine and strengthen the perinatal workforce – two solutions that research shows us work.”

Read more about the Governor’s budget proposal [here](#).