86% of Likely Mississippi Voters Say Maternal Health Care Should Be a Top or High Priority in 2027

HEARTLAND FORWARD
MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH CENTER FOR POLICY & PRACTICE

Heartland Forward's Maternal & Child Health Center for Policy & Practice (MCH CPP) creates real impact by combining research, innovative care models, policy leadership and on-the-ground action to **improve maternal health outcomes** for families across the heartland.



Likely Mississippi Voters Want State Leaders to Act on Maternal Health

Top Priority

86% say improving maternal health care should be a top or high priority when the legislature meets in 2027, one of the highest shares among the 10 states surveyed, and 79% say access to quality care needs to be improved.

Primary Concerns

77% are concerned about the cost of care for local families, 75% about hospitals closing labor and delivery units and 74% about rural access to prenatal and specialized care.

Bipartisan Support

84% support increasing state investment in maternal health care, including 83% of Republicans and 88% of Democrats, and 90% of Republicans and 93% of Democrats say it is important for leaders of both parties to work together on the health of moms and babies.

Key Findings

62% say they or someone close to them has experienced a pregnancy- or postpartum-related challenge, among the highest of the 10 states, including 24% who struggled to afford prenatal or delivery care and 22% who traveled a long distance to see a doctor or give birth.

83% support making it easier for pregnant women to get coverage for early prenatal checkups (55% strongly support), the strongest of any policy tested in Mississippi.

53% name keeping pregnancy and delivery care available in rural communities as a top priority for new state funding, far ahead of any other option.

What Groups Across the State Are Saying

- In North Mississippi, support for every policy tested runs above the statewide level, including 90% for easier early prenatal coverage (83% statewide), and 91% say improving maternal and infant health is essential to supporting working families (86% statewide).
- 42% of Black voters say improving maternal health care should be the legislature's top priority (29% statewide), and 53% say access to quality care needs to be improved a great deal (38% statewide).
- 71% of rural voters say bipartisan cooperation is very important (64% statewide), and 58% strongly support expanding telehealth and mobile clinics for rural pregnant women (51% statewide).

State leaders have strong public support to build on as they consider ways to improve care for mothers and babies.

About Heartland Forward & the Maternal & Child Health Center for Policy & Practice

Heartland Forward is a non-profit, policy think-and-do tank that turns ideas into action for states and local communities. Our mission is to accelerate economic growth, change the narrative about the middle of the country and generate $500 million of economic impact to the heartland by 2030. We do this through applied research, community-driven programs, policy and convenings—focusing on regional competitiveness, talent pipeline and health and wellness. Heartland Forward's Maternal & Child Health Center for Policy & Practice (MCH CPP) works with policymakers, employers, philanthropies, providers and communities to scale evidence-based solutions to improve outcomes for mothers and babies. MCH CPP's work builds from Heartland Forward's landmark research report, *The Economic Case for Investing in Maternal Health*, which describes how improved maternal health outcomes directly improve state economies. MCH CPP works alongside Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America (HMHBA), a national, five-year campaign to cut the U.S. maternal mortality rate in half.

About the Poll

John Zogby Strategies conducted an interactive poll of 500 likely voters in Mississippi from October 8 to 15, 2026, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. Results for subgroups and regions carry larger margins of error. The Mississippi survey is part of a 10-state poll for Heartland Forward in Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Tennessee.