

Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy Begins Term as Chair of National Governors Association's Governors' Spouses' Program

07/15/2022

Unveils This Year's Program Initiative "Creating a National Model to Tackle the Maternal and Infant Health Crisis"

PORTLAND, Maine – First Lady Tammy Murphy and Governor Phil Murphy today took their positions of leadership in the National Governors Association (NGA). First Lady Murphy will serve as the Association's Governors' Spouses' Program Chair, previously held by Susan Hutchinson, wife of Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, who will be replaced by Governor Murphy as Chairman of the NGA.

In addition to taking her position as Chair of the Spouses' Program, First Lady Tammy Murphy also presented her NGA initiative, "Creating a National Model to Tackle the Maternal and Infant Health Crisis," during a panel discussion with Dr. Mary-Ann Etiebet, Lead of Merck for Mothers. The initiative will consist of four roundtables over the next year seeking to center women's voices; improve and utilize maternal and infant health data; expand access and quality of care; and elevate innovative maternal and infant health policies, programs, and technology.

"I am incredibly honored to serve as the NGA's Governors' Spouses' Program Chair and look forward to collaborating across all 50 states to eliminate our country's maternal and infant health crisis," said **First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "As the wealthiest nation in the world, the United States should be a global model for maternal health care, but the shocking and unacceptable reality is that we are ranked 55th in the world for maternal deaths. Every mother and baby across our nation should begin their life together in health, wellness, and joy. I am eager to work with my fellow Governors' spouses and partners to make each of our states, and our country as a whole, the safest and most equitable place in the world to deliver and raise a baby."

The First Lady is no stranger to the cause, which she has championed in New Jersey since the beginning of Governor Murphy's administration in 2018.

In 2019, First Lady Tammy Murphy launched Nurture NJ, a statewide program committed to reducing maternal and infant mortality in New Jersey and ensuring equitable care among women and children of all races and ethnicities. In January of 2021, she unveiled the Nurture NJ Maternal and Infant Health Strategic Plan, with the goal of reducing New Jersey's maternal mortality by 50 percent over five years and eliminating racial disparities in birth outcomes. Since its inception, Nurture NJ has seen 43 pieces of maternal and infant health legislation signed by Governor Murphy, developed and implemented groundbreaking programs and policies, hosted annual Black Maternal and Infant Health Leadership Summits, and more – positioning New Jersey as a leader in fighting the maternal and infant health crisis.

"I am in awe of the bold leadership that First Lady Tammy Murphy has shown in her mission to combat maternal and infant mortality through the Nurture NJ initiative, and I am excited to see that more and more state leaders are focusing on this issue," said **Dr. Mary-Ann Etiebet, Lead of Merck for Mothers**. "Ending preventable maternal mortality is possible if we collaborate more across sectors and Merck for Mothers is proud to be part of our nation's journey to eliminate maternal health inequities."

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