The latest data released today by the National Center for Health Statistics underscores the severe failures of our political and public health institutions to adequately respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, and to act swiftly against the tide of misinformation perpetuated by decision-makers under the previous administration and in our medical establishments. Throughout the pandemic, many Black women and birthing people have been denied the quality care they need and deserve due to overwhelmed hospital and maternity care systems, conflicting policies around provisions of care for laboring individuals, and outright negligence.

We see these failures reflected in the tragic deaths of Sha-Asia Washington and Amber Rose Isaac, Black Mamas whose lives could have been saved had our nation’s leadership taken the crisis seriously from the beginning, and employed effective science-based approaches in their pandemic response. These factors are undergirded by the existing, deeply-rooted institutional racism and bias that continue to inflict harm and suffering on Black women and birthing individuals, preventing their ability to not only survive, but to thrive before, during and after pregnancy.

As the Black Mamas Matter Alliance and our partners work tirelessly to transform these poor outcomes and statistics, we need more lawmakers to step up and commit to enacting policies at the state and federal levels that will advance maternal health, rights and justice for all Black Mamas, throughout and beyond this pandemic, and make equitable investments in local public health sectors across the nation. As always, we must look and listen to the many Black women doctors, nurses, midwives, doulas, scholars, researchers, and organizers who are working to rebuild trust and provide quality care for Black Mamas within their communities. Their lived experiences and expertise must be the compass that guides our decision-making and solutions to curb these crises.”

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**
JANET A. DICKERSON, 917) 653-4368
JANET@HUMANIMPACTSOLUTIONS.COM