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**CONTACT:** Elise Anderson

[elise@votemamafoundation.org](mailto:elise@votemamafoundation.org) ; [press@votemamafoundation.org](mailto:press@votemamafoundation.org)

(214)-490-7003



**VOTE MAMA FOUNDATION PUBLISHES *POLITICS OF PARENTHOOD: REPRESENTATION IN THE 118th CONGRESS REPORT***

*Politics of Parenthood is the largest, most comprehensive publicly available demographic dataset of legislators in the United States.*

*Findings show only 6.8 percent of the 118th Congress are mothers with minor children. In order to reach proportional representation, Americans must elect 59 more moms with minor children to Congress.*

**NEW YORK** — Today [Vote Mama Foundation](#), the leading source of research and analysis about the political participation of mothers, released the findings of its [Politics of Parenthood: Representation in the 118th Congress](#) report.

Until Vote Mama Foundation's [Politics of Parenthood](#) there was no publicly available demographic dataset that included parental status for legislators at any level of government. With *Politics of Parenthood*, Vote Mama Foundation is closing this critical gap in research. Vote Mama Foundation's [debut report](#) in its *Politics of Parenthood* series found that just 5.3% of state legislators are moms with minor children. With its latest report, Vote Mama Foundation provides first-of-its-kind data on the representation of parents in the 118th Congress and an analysis on the intersection of motherhood and federal representation.

**Findings from the *Politics of Parenthood* reveal dismal representation of mothers in the 118th Congress with mothers of minor children comprising just 6.8 percent of all federal legislators.**

The data indicates that the lack of representation of moms with minor children is the result of structural marginalization rather than individual circumstances or preferences, and suggests that moms of minor children face barriers that are unique, or intensified, compared to their counterparts:

- While 24.2% of all members of Congress are dads of minor children, only 6.8% are moms of minor children.
- Moms with minor children are represented in Congress at about one third of the rate they appear in the U.S. population (17.8%), while dads of minors are overrepresented at more than one and a half times the rate in the population (15.1%).
- 11 men serving in Congress welcomed newborns in the past year, but only 11 women have *ever* given birth while serving in Congress.
- Just 1.1% of the 118th Congress are mothers with children under the age of 6. For parents with children under the age of 6 in Congress, dads outnumber moms at a ratio of nearly 9:1.
- Moms of color with minor children are only 3% of the 118th Congress.
- Despite the 118th Congress breaking records for LGBTQIA+ representation, there is only 1 LGBTQIA+ parent with minor children serving in Congress.

Vote Mama Foundation asserts that caregiving creates cultural, financial, and logistical barriers that impact women who are running for and serving in office, and has identified this problem as the “care gap.” *Politics of Parenthood* explores solutions to closing the care gap in Congress, including:

- Reasonable, predictable voting schedules
- Virtual options to participate in voting and committee hearings
- Formal family leave policy for federal legislators
- Changing tables in all members' bathrooms, regardless of gender, and accessible pumping rooms in all legislative buildings
- Expanded House and Senate Child Care Centers to better meet the needs of legislators and staff

“Our political system was not built for parents, and it especially was not built with mothers in mind. The reality is, when a mom runs for office, she faces unique barriers — barriers that many other candidates just don’t have to worry about. When a mom serves in office, she is also confronted with outdated rules and procedures that make balancing both caregiving and legislative duties feel almost impossible. It’s no wonder that just 6.8% of the 118th Congress are moms with minor kids. As *Politics of Parenthood* proves, we are missing critical voices at the decision-making table — we are missing moms,” **said Liuba Grechen Shirley, Vote Mama Foundation Founder and CEO.**

“Parents of minor children are the largest population of caregivers in the United States, but few are in positions of power to craft legislation that *truly* supports American families. Not having enough parents in office means a less diverse Congress, and a legislative body that is disconnected from the policies that so many parents stay up all night thinking about: guns are now the number one cause of death for American children, more than half of Americans live in a childcare desert, and the United States is one of the most dangerous countries in which to give

birth and be born,” **Grechen Shirley added.** “Improved representation for caregivers, especially mothers of young children, can help change our policy priorities. As we stand, however, there are more millionaires in Congress than moms. Vote Mama Foundation fights to change that by identifying the barriers that hold moms back and working to dismantle them.”

The groundbreaking *Politics of Parenthood* dataset enables Vote Mama Foundation to quantify how gender, parenthood, and child age influence the political representation of mothers with minor children. In subsequent *Politics of Parenthood* reports, Vote Mama Foundation will continue to expand its research in identifying and analyzing the barriers that systematically keep moms out of office and out of power.

To learn more about Vote Mama Foundation and *Politics of Parenthood*, visit [votemamafoundation.org](http://votemamafoundation.org)

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**Background:**

To the knowledge of Vote Mama Foundation, the *Politics of Parenthood* dataset is the first to include ability, caregiving, and parental status, making it the most comprehensive publicly available demographic dataset of legislators.

**Vote Mama Foundation:** A 501(c)(3) non-partisan, non-profit organization that fights to normalize moms with young children running for and serving in elected office by identifying and breaking down the structural barriers that hold moms back. It has successfully legalized the use of [Campaign Funds for Childcare](#) in 28 states, so far. Vote Mama Foundation is also the leading source of research and analysis about the political representation of mothers in the United States.