

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION establishing the Infant Mortality Task Force.

2 WHEREAS, infant mortality is defined as the death of an infant before his or her  
3 first birthday; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2018 over 21,000 infants died in the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the  
6 leading causes of infant mortality are birth defects, low birthweight and preterm birth,  
7 maternal pregnancy complications, sudden infant death syndrome, and unintentional  
8 injuries; and

9 WHEREAS, the low birthweight rate has risen in Kentucky from an average of 8.8  
10 percent in 2019 to 8.9 percent in 2020; and

11 WHEREAS, Kentucky's low birthweight racial gap between Black and white  
12 infants increased by 22 percent from 2019 to 2020 from 5.0 to 6.1 percentage points; and

13 WHEREAS, research indicates that socioeconomic inequality is a primary  
14 contributor to higher infant mortality rates; and

15 WHEREAS, 21.3 percent of females ages 18 to 44 years old in Kentucky live in  
16 poverty; and

17 WHEREAS, Kentucky ranks 37th out of the 50 states for infant mortality rates; and

18 WHEREAS, in Kentucky there are seven infant deaths per 1,000 live births; and

19 WHEREAS, in Kentucky infants born to mothers ages 15 to 19 years old are at a  
20 higher risk of infant mortality, with an average of nine infant deaths per 1,000 live births;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Black infants are at higher risk than white infants, with 10.9 infant  
23 deaths per 1,000 Black births, compared with 6.3 infant deaths per 1,000 white births; and

24 NOW, THEREFORE,

25 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***  
26 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:***

27 ➔Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission shall establish the Infant

1 Mortality Task Force to review factors influencing infant mortality and make  
2 recommendations to decrease the rate of infant mortality in the Commonwealth.

3 ➔Section 2. The duties of the Infant Mortality Task Force shall include but are  
4 not limited to:

5 (1) Reviewing research that examines the connections between a mother's health  
6 before, during, and between pregnancies, as well as that of her child across the course of  
7 the child's life;

8 (2) Reviewing comprehensive data on infant mortality deaths and pregnancy  
9 complications, including data disaggregated by race, geography, and socioeconomic  
10 status;

11 (3) Reviewing research to identify best practices and effective interventions for  
12 improving the quality and safety of maternity care and reducing infant mortality; and

13 (4) Making recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission, the  
14 Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and any other relevant executive branch agency,  
15 including but not limited to the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, the Public Protection  
16 Cabinet, the Economic Development Cabinet, and the Education and Workforce  
17 Development Cabinet, to improve health care, and social, economic, and environmental  
18 conditions that may improve maternal health and decrease infant mortality.

19 ➔Section 3. The Infant Mortality Task Force shall be composed of the following  
20 members, with final membership of the task force being subject to the consideration and  
21 approval of the Legislative Research Commission:

22 (1) Four members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of  
23 the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated by the Speaker of the  
24 House of Representatives as a co-chair of the task force; and

25 (2) Four members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, one of  
26 whom shall be designated by the President of the Senate as a co-chair of the task force.

27 ➔Section 4. The Infant Mortality Task Force shall meet monthly during the 2022

1 Interim of the General Assembly. The task force shall submit findings and  
2 recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the appropriate  
3 committee or committees by December 1, 2022.

4       ➔Section 5. Provisions of this Resolution to the contrary notwithstanding, the  
5 Legislative Research Commission shall have the authority to alternatively assign the  
6 issues identified herein to an interim joint committee or subcommittee thereof, and to  
7 designate a study completion date.