

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 16

BY REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize April 11-17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week.

WHEREAS, the wonders of pregnancy and childbirth can be the beginning joys of motherhood, leading to a lifetime of happiness and fulfillment; while many women experience pregnancy and childbirth with few challenges, each year there are women who needlessly face short-term, long-term, and dangerous complications, with some complications resulting in death; and

WHEREAS, compared to white women, black women are more likely to experience preventable maternal death; in 2020, the maternal mortality rate for black women was more than fifty-five deaths per one hundred thousand live births; according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2020, eight hundred sixty-one women died of maternal causes in the United States; in 2021, that number rose to one thousand two hundred five women who died of maternal causes in this country, as reported by the National Center for Health Statistics; this translates into more than thirty-three deaths per one hundred thousand live births nationally; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana unfortunately leads the nation with the highest maternal mortality rate; according to the Louisiana Department of Health, black mothers are four times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than their white counterparts; the alarming rate of black maternal mortality in this state can be attributed to a number of factors including systemic bias, socioeconomic status, lack of access to quality health care, and lack of adequate health coverage; experiencing pregnancy and childbirth should not be a death sentence for any woman because of her station in life; and

WHEREAS, reducing the number of preventable maternal deaths and reducing health disparities among women should be a top priority of this state; it can be shown that

improving health outcomes for pregnancy and childbirth increases the survival rate of mothers and their ability to raise their own children and makes a positive impact on the state; and

WHEREAS, it is important to support every woman who experiences pregnancy and childbirth; it is vital for healthcare providers to recognize the signs of and properly diagnose maternal complications in a timely and effective manner so that appropriate treatment can be rendered; and

WHEREAS, Black Maternal Health Week is dedicated to building awareness, activism, and community and is recognized every year, from April 11-17, as part of the observation of National Minority Health Month in April; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to increase awareness of maternal and infant health outcomes black women endure, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., launched its initiative and essential program, Project CRADLE Care, and has joined forces with many other organizations to highlight and recognize Black Maternal Health Week.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize April 11-17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week in the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the executive director of Black Mamas Matter Alliance and the president of the Mu Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., in Baton Rouge.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE