

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 59

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Designates May 2021 as Maternal Mental Health Month  
in Louisiana

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To designate May 2021 as Maternal Mental Health Month in Louisiana.

3 WHEREAS, each year, approximately 10% of pregnant women and 13% of women  
4 worldwide who have recently given birth experience a maternal mental health issue,  
5 primarily depression; and

6 WHEREAS, in developing countries, the rates of depression are even higher, with  
7 15.6% of women experiencing a mental health issue during pregnancy and 19.8% after child  
8 birth; and

9 WHEREAS, maternal depression is a common health issue that impacts many  
10 women during and after pregnancy, and if left untreated, it can have serious medical,  
11 societal, and economic consequences on women, infants, and families; and

12 WHEREAS, pregnant women who have untreated depression are more likely to have  
13 a premature birth or a low-birthweight baby; and

14 WHEREAS, postpartum depression can begin any time after delivery and last up to  
15 a year; and

16 WHEREAS, postpartum depression is the most underdiagnosed and common  
17 pregnancy complication and is one that makes it difficult for mother and child to bond,  
18 which itself may have long-term effects on cognitive development; and

19 WHEREAS, symptoms of postpartum depression, which include depressed mood,  
20 loss of interest in daily activities, sleep or appetite disturbance, feelings of guilt, and poor

1 concentration, can last longer and differ from symptoms of the "baby blues", which typically  
2 resolve on their own within ten days of delivery; and

3 WHEREAS, post-traumatic stress disorder occurs in some people after they have  
4 experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event and occurs in as many as eight in one  
5 hundred women during pregnancy; and

6 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes strongly supports efforts to improve screening,  
7 diagnosis, and treatment for women with maternal mental health disorders; and

8 WHEREAS, once identified and diagnosed, most postpartum mood disorders can be  
9 treated; and

10 WHEREAS, mental health screenings are critical components to the identification  
11 and treatment of maternal mental health disorders; and

12 WHEREAS, depression and maternal stress screenings can be incorporated into well-  
13 child visits and postpartum check-ups, and thus can be administered by OB-GYNs,  
14 pediatricians, and family physicians; and

15 WHEREAS, symptoms of postpartum mood disorders are sometimes misattributed  
16 to normal pregnancy changes, and thus go under- or unreported, so it is important that  
17 providers and the public are educated to recognize the symptoms of maternal mood  
18 disorders; and

19 WHEREAS, adequate funding to support services that track maternal mental health  
20 disorders is needed to support research and treatment initiatives.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
22 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate May 2021 as Maternal Mental Health Month  
23 in Louisiana.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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