

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 59

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, symptoms of postpartum depression, which include depressed mood, loss of interest in daily activities, sleep or appetite disturbance, feelings of guilt, and poor concentration, can last longer and differ from symptoms of the "baby blues", which typically resolve on their own within ten days of delivery; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES