

2021 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 208

BY SENATOR PETERSON

HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to amend the state Medicaid plan to extend postpartum coverage for a full year after pregnancy ends.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to develop and submit to the
3 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services an amendment to the Medicaid state
4 plan on or before April 1, 2022, allowing for postpartum Medicaid coverage for
5 twelve months after birth for eligible pregnant individuals who qualify under the
6 state's Medicaid plan in furtherance of House Bill No. 468 of the 2021 Regular
7 Session.

8 WHEREAS, in the state of the Louisiana, postpartum Medicaid coverage is
9 guaranteed for sixty days after the delivery of a newborn child; and

10 WHEREAS, statistics show that most life-threatening complications for new mothers
11 occur up to one year after giving birth; and

12 WHEREAS, Louisiana has one of the highest maternal death rates in the country
13 with black and brown women experiencing pregnancy-related deaths at three times the rate
14 of pregnancy-related deaths experienced by white women; and

15 WHEREAS, Louisiana is one of eight states that received an "F" on the March of
16 Dimes Report Card; and

17 WHEREAS, more than half of childbirths in Louisiana are covered by Medicaid; and

18 WHEREAS, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists,

1 people who give birth while covered by Medicaid are more at risk for maternal morbidity
2 and mortality with seventy percent of women identifying health issues after birth; and

3 WHEREAS, two-thirds of pregnancy-associated mortality occur between forty-three
4 days postpartum to one year after delivery; and

5 WHEREAS, for every one maternal death, there are seventy maternal women who
6 experience morbidity events, which are illnesses or disabilities that can shorten their life
7 expectancies; and

8 WHEREAS, according to the National Institutes of Health, the cost of each severe
9 maternal morbidity event is more than eleven thousand dollars; and

10 WHEREAS, in just one Louisiana hospital, the annual cost of Medicaid readmissions
11 for postpartum health issues was over eight hundred seventy thousand dollars in 2020; and

12 WHEREAS, the cost of expanding Medicaid for twelve months after childbirth is
13 significantly less than the monetary and social costs of the medical issues that occur due to
14 lack of preventive care; and

15 WHEREAS, improving access to Medicaid through postpartum expansion has been
16 associated with a fifty percent increase in the use of outpatient care, particularly for women
17 with severe maternal morbidity; and

18 WHEREAS, Louisiana can protect the reproductive health of women, reduce
19 readmissions, reduce maternal morbidity events, and reduce maternal mortality by expanding
20 Medicaid postpartum coverage to twelve months after childbirth; and

21 WHEREAS, maternal health should be a priority for our state because it would
22 reduce costs and improve the quality of life for our Louisiana families in the long term.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
24 does hereby urge and request that the Louisiana Department of Health submit to the Centers
25 for Medicare and Medicaid Services an amendment to the Medicaid state plan on or before
26 April 1, 2022, allowing for postpartum Medicaid coverage for twelve months after birth for
27 eligible pregnant individuals who qualify under the state's Medicaid state plan as outlined
28 by guidance provided as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
30 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

