

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 99

BY REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER

A RESOLUTION

To recognize April 11-17, 2024, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana.

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 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 pregnancy-related causes than their white counterparts; the alarming rate of black maternal mortality in this state can be attributed to several factors including implicit and systemic bias, socioeconomic status, lack of access to quality health care, and lack of adequate health coverage; and

WHEREAS, pregnancy and childbirth should not be a death sentence for any woman; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is committed to reducing the number of preventable maternal deaths and reducing health disparities among women; improving health outcomes for pregnancy and childbirth increases the survival rate of mothers and their ability to raise their own children, which has 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, improving access to health care by expanding telehealth services and the use of midwives and doulas to foster healthy pregnancies has shown positive results in the community; 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, 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 House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize April 11-17, 2024, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana and does hereby extend sincerest wishes that the state continue to make progress in its efforts to improve maternal healthcare, especially for black mothers.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES