

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 208

BY SENATOR PETERSON

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, people who give birth while covered by Medicaid are more at risk for maternal morbidity and mortality with seventy percent of women identifying health issues after birth; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE