

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 22

BY REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER

A RESOLUTION

To designate April 11-17, 2025, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the wonders of pregnancy and childbirth can mark the beginning joys of motherhood, paving the way to a lifetime of happiness and fulfillment; while many women experience pregnancy and childbirth with few challenges, each year there are women who needlessly encounter short-term, long-term, and serious complications, some of which can tragically result 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 ranks highest among the fifty states for its maternal mortality rate; according to the Louisiana Department of Health, black mothers are four times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause 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 insufficient health coverage; and

WHEREAS, experiencing pregnancy and childbirth should not be a death sentence for any woman because of her station in life; reducing the number of preventable maternal

deaths and addressing health disparities among women should be a top priority of this state; it can be shown that improving health outcomes for pregnancy and childbirth not only increases the survival rate of mothers but allows them to raise their own children thereby benefitting the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to support every woman who experiences pregnancy and childbirth; it is vital for healthcare providers to identify the signs of maternal complications and diagnose them promptly and accurately, ensuring that the appropriate treatment is rendered; and

WHEREAS, enhancing healthcare accessibility through the expansion of telehealth services, midwives, and doulas to foster healthy pregnancies has yielded positive outcomes 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 designate April 11-17, 2025, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana and does hereby encourage all Louisianians to support initiatives that seek to improve maternal healthcare, especially for black mothers throughout the state.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES