

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 161

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Designates April 11-17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To designate April 11-17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in Louisiana.

3 WHEREAS, Black Maternal Health Week was founded and is led by the Black
4 Mamas Matter Alliance to build awareness, activism, and community-driven solutions to
5 improve Black maternal health outcomes and is observed annually from April 11-17; and

6 WHEREAS, Black women in the United States continue to experience
7 disproportionately high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality, regardless of income or
8 education, due to systemic inequities, implicit bias, and gaps in access to quality care; and

9 WHEREAS, in Louisiana, maternal health outcomes reflect significant disparities
10 and pregnancy-related mortality rates remain among the highest in the nation; and

11 WHEREAS, Louisiana has consistently ranked among the worst states in the nation
12 for maternal health outcomes, which underscores the urgency for targeted intervention and
13 sustained policy action; and

14 WHEREAS, Black women in Louisiana are approximately two to three times more
15 likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women, which reflects persistent
16 racial disparities in health outcomes; and

17 WHEREAS, the leading causes of pregnancy-related death include cardiovascular
18 conditions, hemorrhage, and complications associated with chronic health conditions, and
19 the majority of pregnancy-related deaths in Louisiana are considered preventable; and

1 WHEREAS, Louisiana experiences elevated rates of severe maternal morbidity,
2 including life-threatening complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which
3 disproportionately impact Black women; and

4 WHEREAS, social determinants of health, including access to prenatal and
5 postpartum care, insurance coverage, transportation, and provider bias, contribute
6 significantly to adverse maternal health outcomes across the state; and

7 WHEREAS, culturally competent, community-centered care models, including the
8 integration of doulas, midwives, and community health workers, have proven essential in
9 improving maternal and infant health outcomes, particularly for Black families; and

10 WHEREAS, Louisiana-based organizations, health care providers, doulas, midwives,
11 and advocates continue to play a critical role in advancing equity, improving outcomes, and
12 supporting families before, during, and after pregnancy; and

13 WHEREAS, observing Black Maternal Health Week serves as an opportunity to
14 amplify the voices of Black mothers, recognize community leadership, and recommit to
15 policies and investments that ensure safe, respectful, and equitable maternal healthcare for
16 all.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate April 11- 17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health
19 Week in Louisiana; does hereby commend the work of community-based organizations,
20 health care providers, and advocates across Louisiana for their dedication to improving
21 maternal health outcomes and advancing equity; does hereby affirm its commitment to
22 supporting policies, programs, and partnerships that eliminate maternal health disparities and
23 ensure that every mother in Louisiana has access to high-quality, culturally competent care;
24 and does hereby encourage continued public-private partnerships, data-driven strategies, and
25 innovative care delivery models that expand access, improve outcomes, and strengthen
26 accountability across Louisiana's maternal health system.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 161 Original

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Walters

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