

Legislation Text

File #: 240253, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and supporting the health and wellness of Black mamas and birthing people by acknowledging April 11 - 17, 2024, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The seventh annual national Black Maternal Health Week - themed “*Our Bodies STILL belong to us: Reproductive Justice Now!*” - will be held April 11 - 17, 2024. The week fosters awareness, activism, and community building intended to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health in the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black women in the United States are 3 to 4 times more likely than white women to die from pregnancy-related causes and are twice as likely to suffer from life-threatening pregnancy complications, known as “maternal morbidities;” and

WHEREAS, The high rates of maternal mortality among Black women span across income levels, education levels, and socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, Between 2013 and 2018, there were 110 pregnancy-associated deaths of Philadelphia residents at an average of 18 deaths per year. Fifty-two percent of the pregnancy-associated deaths occurred in women younger than 30; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia, Black women are 4 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women; and

WHEREAS, Non-Hispanic Black women made up 43% of live births in Philadelphia and accounted for 73% of the pregnancy-related deaths from 2013 to 2018 as compared to non-Hispanic white women who made up 26% of Philadelphia births and accounted for 19% of pregnancy-related deaths; and

WHEREAS, Black women have historically had the highest maternal mortality rates due to a combination of effects from institutional racism that have resulted in susceptibility to certain health conditions and lack of access to quality prenatal care; and

WHEREAS, Events for Black Maternal Health week will be held locally by the Oshun Family Center. Oshun provides racially concordant care to members of the Black community that are impacted by postpartum mood changes, birth, and racial trauma. Oshun works with allies, legislators, lawmakers, hospitals, educators, and the community to shift from raising awareness to becoming action-oriented in regard to the Black Maternal Mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia would also like to recognize the Pennsylvania Black Maternal Health Caucus founded in October 2023 by State Representative and Delegation Chair Morgan Cephas, State Representative Gina H. Curry, and State Representative La’Tasha D. Mayes for their tireless work supporting black maternal healthcare in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Representative Cephas and the PA Black Maternal Health Caucus has championed \$25.6 million in American Rescue Plan funding allocation for new maternal and child health initiatives in Pennsylvania. The initiatives include lead abatement and remediation, Medicaid expansion for 12-months postpartum, doula certification and workforce development, doula services for Pennsylvania incarcerated people, whole mother care, grants for local maternal mortality review committees, maternal care innovation grants, healthy food pilot, and new mom/new baby training; and

WHEREAS, A fair and wide distribution of resources and birth options, especially with regard to reproductive health care services and maternal health programming, are critical to closing the racial gap in maternal health outcomes. Philadelphia has dedicated and high-quality organizations providing such services such as A Home for Shana Foundation and Maternity Care Coalition and Oshun Family Center; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Council of the City of Philadelphia hereby recognizes April 11 - 17, 2024, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Engrossed copies of this Resolution be presented to Representative Morgan Cephas and the Oshun Family Center, further evidencing the sincere respect of this Legislative body.