

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and supporting the health and wellness of Black mamas and birthing people by acknowledging April 11-17, 2022, as “Black Maternal Health Week”.

WHEREAS, The fifth annual national Black Maternal Health Week, held April 11-17, 2022, will be a week of awareness, activism, and community building intended to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The BMHW 2022 theme, “Building for Liberation: Centering Black Mamas, Black Families and Black Systems of Care,” centers Black women’s scholarship, maternity care work, and advocacy across the full -spectrum of sexual, maternal, and reproductive health care, services, programs, and initiatives. Additionally, the 2022 theme reflects the critical need for learning about Black Feminist and womanist approaches in strengthening wellness structures within our communities, across the Diaspora, as a revolutionary act in the pursuit of liberation and in the global fight to END maternal mortality; 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-relate causes; and

WHEREAS, Black women in the United States suffer from life-threatening pregnancy complications, known as “maternal morbidities,” twice as often as white women; and

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

WHEREAS, Racism and discrimination play a consequential role in maternal health care experiences and outcomes of Black birthing people; and

WHEREAS, Between 2013-2018, 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 for 43% of live births in Philadelphia but 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, Maternity Care Coalition’s mission is to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and parenting families, and enhance school readiness for children 0-3, and they have partnered with over 145,000 families in the Southeastern PA region; 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; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize April 11-17, 2022, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in Philadelphia.