

Legislation Text

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Recognizing January 23, 2020, as “Maternal Health Awareness Day” in the City of Philadelphia to Remember All the Women Who Died from Complications of Pregnancy or Childbirth.

WHEREAS, Despite recent advances in medical science and technology, the number of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States (the number of women who die during pregnancy, or within one year after childbirth, from any cause that is related to, or aggravated by, the pregnancy) has continued to rise; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) reports that pregnancy-related mortality in the United States has tripled in the last 30 years, and African-American women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy- or childbirth-related causes than white women. Philadelphia reports a maternal mortality rate of 27.4 deaths per 100,000 live births, and African-American mothers are twice as likely to die within one year of childbirth in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The CDC further reports that approximately 700 women die annually in the United States from pregnancy-related complications; one-third of pregnancy-related deaths occur from one week up to a year after birth; and approximately three in five pregnancy-related deaths were preventable; and

WHEREAS, On September 17, 2019, Philadelphia City officials along with various other local organizations announced that the nonprofit Merck for Mothers had awarded the Health Federation of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Maternal Mortality Review Team a million dollars to implement and expand programs designated to drive down the maternal mortality rate. This grant is one of nine awarded by Merck for Mothers as part of their Safer Childbirth Cities Initiative, which provides \$500 million over ten years to improve the health and well-being of mothers before, during, and after pregnancy and childbirth; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia must continue to be instrumental in developing innovative strategies that help decrease the maternal mortality rate, which includes educating health care providers and patients on the importance of attending postpartum visits and leveraging postpartum care as a means towards a healthier future. Postpartum care should be permanent along side services and support tailored to each woman’s individual need after birth; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia still has much work to do in reducing the incidence of maternal mortality. The City must work with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Maternal Mortality Review Committee and other organizations to implement strategies that include, but are not limited to, aligning current maternal mortality surveillance review procedures with national standards; provide implicit bias training for MCH providers; and improved screenings and treatments during pregnancy and postpartum period; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize January 23, 2020, as “Maternal Health Awareness Day” in the City of Philadelphia to remember all the women who died from complications of pregnancy or childbirth.

