

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing March 2024 to be Kentucky Maternal and Infant
2 Mortality and Disparities Awareness Month.

3 WHEREAS, economic inequality, structural racism, and public health failures have
4 resulted in higher illness and death rates for black people, especially when it comes to
5 maternal and reproductive health; and

6 WHEREAS, Kentucky is suffering a maternal mortality crisis as a result of
7 underinvesting and underfunding in health care for women, particularly in black
8 communities, leading to a precipitous increase in maternal mortality rates and racial
9 disparities; and

10 WHEREAS, data shows a racial disparity exists among the maternal mortality rate
11 in black women and white women in the United States, as the maternal mortality rate for
12 black women is 55.3 per 100,000 compared to white women who have a maternal
13 mortality rate of 19.1 per 100,000 live births; and

14 WHEREAS, black women are estimated to be three to four times more likely to die
15 from a pregnancy-related complication than white women; and

16 WHEREAS, the incidence of pregnancy-related mortality of black women in some
17 parts of the United States is close to that of women in some developing countries; and

18 WHEREAS, it is estimated more than 60 percent of pregnancy-related deaths are
19 preventable; and

20 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),
21 the leading causes of infant mortality are birth defects, low birthweight and preterm birth,
22 maternal pregnancy complications, sudden infant death syndrome, and unintentional
23 injuries; and

24 WHEREAS, the national infant mortality rate for white infants is 5.4 per 1,000 live
25 births and the national infant mortality rate for black infants is more than double at an
26 alarming rate of 10.6 per 1,000 live births; and

27 WHEREAS, the infant mortality rate for black infants was 9.9 per 1,000 births

1 compared to 5.3 for white infants and 6.1 for Hispanic infants in 2020; and

2 WHEREAS, the leading cause of infant mortality in Kentucky is prematurity-
3 related conditions followed by sudden unexpected infant death syndrome; and

4 WHEREAS, black infants are 2.3 times more likely to die from complications
5 related to low birthweight compared to white infants; and black mothers are 2.5 times
6 more likely than white mothers to receive late or no prenatal care; and

7 WHEREAS, in the United States, the rate of preterm birth among black women is
8 36 percent higher than the rate of preterm birth among white women; and

9 WHEREAS, to reduce health disparities, policymakers could improve maternal
10 health outcomes and lower infant mortality by providing equity in care to all people in
11 Kentucky, including helping patients manage chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart
12 disease, high blood pressure, and obesity; identifying and addressing unconscious bias in
13 healthcare; and ensuring all pregnant women have adequate access to perinatal and
14 postpartum care;

15 NOW, THEREFORE,

16 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
17 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

18 ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives does hereby recognize the month of
19 March 2024 to be Kentucky Maternal and Infant Mortality and Disparities Awareness
20 Month.