

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 103

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

MENTAL HEALTH: Requests that certain state agencies address the impacts of maternal depression and anxiety and provide evidence-based preventive care, early identification, and treatment services

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request that certain state agencies address the impacts of maternal depression
3 and anxiety and implement maternal mental health screenings to facilitate evidence-
4 based preventative care, early identification, and treatment services.

5 WHEREAS, maternal depression and anxiety negatively impact public health in the
6 state of Louisiana; and

7 WHEREAS, maternal depression and anxiety encompass a range of symptoms and
8 mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, social withdrawal, and, in extreme
9 cases, psychosis; and

10 WHEREAS, mental health issues are the most common complication of pregnancy
11 and childbirth, and when left untreated, maternal mental health disorders can have serious
12 medical, societal, and economic consequences; and

13 WHEREAS, at least one in eight new mothers experiences maternal depression and
14 anxiety; and

15 WHEREAS, a mother's mental health is directly connected to her physical health and
16 the health of her baby, born or unborn; and

17 WHEREAS, maternal depression and anxiety can affect a woman from the early
18 stages of pregnancy until over one year after the birth of the child; and

1 WHEREAS, maternal depression and anxiety are common complications of
2 childbirth, with incidence rates higher than pre-term births, low birth weight babies, and
3 gestational diabetes; and

4 WHEREAS, when a mother experiences maternal depression and anxiety, it affects
5 family well-being and stability; and

6 WHEREAS, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) occurs in some people after they
7 have experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event and as many as eight out of one
8 hundred women may experience it during pregnancy; and

9 WHEREAS, maternal depression and anxiety affect parent-child bonding and lower
10 rates of breastfeeding; and

11 WHEREAS, children of affected mothers have an increased risk for serious health,
12 developmental, or behavioral conditions, which can affect the child's overall well-being and
13 growth; and

14 WHEREAS, many mothers feel reluctant to report symptoms or concerns, which has
15 contributed to the lack of awareness among the public and healthcare providers; and

16 WHEREAS, there are evidence-based, cost effective screening, detection, and
17 treatment options that are available for mothers and children, but these options are not
18 adequately or consistently applied in the state of Louisiana; and

19 WHEREAS, some neonatal intensive care units have incorporated screening parents
20 for PTSD into their protocols; and

21 WHEREAS, adequate funding to support services that track maternal mental health
22 disorders is needed to support research and treatment initiatives.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
24 recognize maternal depression and anxiety as a statewide public health issue of concern
25 which is in need of a resolution.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby see the
27 need to address maternal mental health disorders at all levels, from individuals and families
28 to community-wide organizations, systems, and policies within the state.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge
2 the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and the medical community to develop and
3 utilize evidence-based approaches that do all of the following:

4 (1) Expand provider training, education, and support, and implement a standard
5 of care across practices in perinatal and pediatric settings, including those working with
6 mothers experiencing substance use disorders and those in emergency room settings.

7 (2) Expand the obstetric healthcare workforce to include psychiatric specialists.

8 (3) Screen mothers during each trimester of their pregnancies, at the first
9 postpartum visit, and at a six-month postpartum obstetrics or primary care visit.

10 (4) Screen parents by pediatric providers at the first, second, third, fourth, and
11 sixth month well-child visits.

12 (5) Refer to behavioral healthcare providers, including reproductive psychiatric
13 specialists when necessary, all pregnant and postpartum women who screen above the
14 average score on an evidence-based screening tool or who indicate any suicidal ideation.

15 (6) Sufficiently reimburse providers for the role they play in the screening,
16 diagnosis, and treatment process.

17 (7) Increase public awareness and public education of maternal mental health
18 disorders.

19 (8) Expand statewide maternal mental health data collection, monitoring, and
20 evaluation, and share information across state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and local
21 authorities through centralized systems.

22 (9) Increase support for prevention and peer support models, including home
23 visiting programs, community health workers, and other peer or in-home support models.

24 (10) Embed maternal mental health into all statewide crisis response policies.

25 (11) Expand public and private models for prevention and care.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge
27 all offices and agencies in the state of Louisiana whose responsibilities include working with
28 new mothers, families, and children, including the Louisiana Department of Health and local
29 health authorities, to address the short-term and long-term impacts of maternal depression
30 and anxiety so that evidence-based preventive care, early identification, and treatment

1 services are available and accessible statewide for all women, and adverse consequences in
2 children and families can be prevented.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
4 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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)]

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Duplessis

Requests that certain state agencies address the impacts of maternal depression and anxiety and implement certain screenings for treatment services.