

2020 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 74

Offered January 8, 2020

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Designating February, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Maternal Health Awareness Month in Virginia.

Patron—Ward

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, preventable maternal and infant mortality and morbidity affects women and their families in all jurisdictions in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the United States is the only industrialized country with a rising maternal mortality ratio and is ranked fourth globally for its maternal mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, maternal and infant mortality is exacerbated by factors such as poverty, gender inequality, age, and multiple forms of discrimination, as well as factors such as lack of access to adequate health facilities and technology and lack of infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, considerable racial disparities in pregnancy-related mortality exist, with deaths per live birth for black women nearly three times higher than such deaths for white women; and

WHEREAS, the root cause of these disparities is longstanding structural racism, which has contributed to poorer health outcomes among communities of color; and

WHEREAS, reducing infant and maternal mortality will require a multifaceted, comprehensive national strategy, including access to health coverage; access to a continuum of prevention and intervention services for all women, infants, and families; access to high-quality, patient-centered care; and investments in prevention and public health throughout communities; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is committed to better understanding the root causes of pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths, identifying ways to improve maternal care and maternal health outcomes, reducing infant mortality, and improving the health of pregnant women; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate February, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Maternal Health Awareness Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Virginia Department of Health so that members of the agency may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this month on the General Assembly's website.

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