

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL**

April 5, 2022

**Proclaiming Black Maternal Health Week and The Day of the Black Infant in Los Angeles County, April 11-17, 2022**

“Black Maternal Health Week” (April 11-17, 2022) was established five years ago to bring local attention to the national maternal health care crisis in the Black community. The week is celebrated by centering and celebrating Black mothers/mamas, families, and the systems of care working on their behalf toward joyous and healthy births, underscoring the importance of Black individuals being active participants in the policy decisions that impact their lives.

In Los Angeles County, Black women die due to pregnancy-related complications at four times the rate of White women and Black infants die before their first birthday at more than three times the rate of White infants. High mortality rates among Black women and Black infants span across income and education levels, as well as geography. The intersections of historical and structural racism, gender oppression, and inequities in the social determinants of health contribute to disproportionate stress on Black women and subsequent unequal health outcomes. Further, the presence of a pandemic exacerbating and highlighting social and health inequities and/or the increasing focus on structural racism following ongoing incidents of law enforcement violence impacting Black communities warrants a focus and intentionality on both fighting disparity and advancing joyous and healthy births for Black families.

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MOTION

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The response to this crisis requires collaborators of all kinds, with Black women in leadership roles, coming together to advance change, practice anti-racism, and ensure access to high quality, comprehensive, culturally relevant reproductive and maternal health care. The Departments of Public Health and Health Services, alongside First 5 LA, maintain the African American Infant and Maternal Mortality Prevention Initiative to address birth outcome inequities and support joyous and healthy births for Black parents. Their efforts include: the establishment of four community action teams covering five Service Planning Areas; creating public awareness campaigns and resources for families and collaborators to activate “villages of support.” These community action teams provide free, culturally congruent doula support to Black pregnant people Countywide; support fatherhood trainings and support groups, deliver anti-racism and anti-implicit bias trainings, lead the Cherished Futures hospital quality improvement collaborative, and are active in the creation of a Black Maternal Center of Excellence in partnership with Charles Drew University.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Proclaim the week of April 11 through 17, 2022 as “Black Maternal Health Week,” and within that week, April 16, 2022, as “The Day of the Black Infant” throughout Los Angeles County, so that we can become a village of support for Black women and families, for systems of care to transform their policies and practices to better center these communities and address bias, for funders to prioritize support for Black woman-led organizations and efforts, and for all residents to become better informed about Black maternal and infant health issues and a just response.

**I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Urge providers and the public to join one of the four Community Action Teams (CAT), located in Antelope Valley, San Fernando/Santa Clarita Valley, San Gabriel Valley, and South Los Angeles/South Bay. Through meetings and events, CAT participants receive information about topics impacting Black family health and lead the way in determining regional solutions to health injustices.

**I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Instruct the Director of the Department of Public Health to work with community partners to disseminate resources and best practices to healthcare providers regarding

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implementation of the requirements in Senate Bill 464 of 2019, and urge all hospitals, alternative birth centers, and primary clinics that provide perinatal care to fulfill these requirements by implementing an evidence-based implicit bias training program to provide patients with information about continuing health care requirements following hospital discharge on their right to be protected from discrimination.

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(YV/JJ)