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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 353 Session of  
2012

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INTRODUCED BY FONTANA, COSTA, ALLOWAY, ARGALL, BAKER, BLAKE, BOSCOLA, BREWSTER, BROWNE, BRUBAKER, CORMAN, DINNIMAN, EARLL, EICHELBERGER, ERICKSON, FARNESE, FERLO, FOLMER, GORDNER, GREENLEAF, HUGHES, KASUNIC, KITCHEN, LEACH, McILHINNEY, MENSCH, PICCOLA, PILEGGI, RAFFERTY, ROBBINS, SCARNATI, SCHWANK, SMUCKER, SOLOBAY, STACK, TARTAGLIONE, TOMLINSON, VANCE, VOGEL, VULAKOVICH, WARD, WASHINGTON, WAUGH, D. WHITE, M. WHITE, WILLIAMS, WOZNIAK, YAW AND YUDICHAK, SEPTEMBER 24, 2012

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INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, SEPTEMBER 24, 2012

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of September 2012 as "Infant Mortality  
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Infant mortality, referring to the death of a baby  
4 before reaching his or her first birthday, is especially  
5 prevalent in communities with large minority populations, high  
6 rates of unemployment, poverty and limited access to safe  
7 housing and medical providers; and

8 WHEREAS, Infant mortality is recognized as an indicator of  
9 the nation's health and health disparities in the population;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Infant mortality is a significant and troubling  
12 public health issue for which studies have shown that the cost  
13 of care for low birth weight babies, a major risk factor  
14 associated with infant death, has an estimated annual economic

1 impact of \$26.2 billion; and

2 WHEREAS, The United States infant mortality rate ranks 49th  
3 in the world according to the 2012 CIA World Factbook report;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania ranks 17th in infant deaths, with an  
6 infant mortality rate of 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births  
7 according to the United States Census Bureau; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2010, the infant mortality rate in Pennsylvania  
9 among African Americans was 14.4 deaths per 1,000 live births as  
10 compared to 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births for non-Hispanic  
11 Caucasians; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2010, the Allegheny County infant mortality rate  
13 for non-Hispanic African Americans was 15.1 deaths per 1,000  
14 live births, approximately 3.5 times greater than the infant  
15 mortality rate of 4.2 deaths in non-Hispanic Caucasians; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1991, the high overall infant mortality rate in  
17 the City of Pittsburgh allowed for the designation of one of the  
18 original 15 Healthy Start, Inc., projects to be placed within  
19 the county by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health  
20 Resources and Services Administration, United States Department  
21 of Health and Human Services; and

22 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is home to 7 of the 105 Healthy Start,  
23 Inc., projects, which collectively have increased early entry  
24 first trimester prenatal care from 41.8% to 70% in this  
25 Commonwealth; and

26 WHEREAS, Since the 1991 implementation of the Healthy Start,  
27 Inc., Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Project, the infant mortality  
28 rate for all races has been reduced by almost 30%, including  
29 African-American families; and

30 WHEREAS, Healthy Start, Inc.'s Pittsburgh/Allegheny and

1 Fayette County Projects have successfully increased the rate of  
2 a pregnant woman's participation in early prenatal care during  
3 her first trimester to 89.1% and 92.7%, respectively, directly  
4 saving the lives of many vulnerable infants; and

5 WHEREAS, Nine out of ten children born to parents receiving  
6 services from Healthy Start, Inc., in Allegheny and Fayette  
7 counties are born full term, at normal weight and without the  
8 incidence of birth defects; and

9 WHEREAS, Organizations such as Healthy Start, Inc., which is  
10 a federally funded community-based organization that implements  
11 case management, home visitation and health education and has an  
12 active community coalition, have contributed significantly to  
13 decreasing the high rates of infant mortality both locally and  
14 nationally; and

15 WHEREAS, Groups across the nation are holding special events  
16 like baby parades, Bowling for Babies fundraisers, neighborhood  
17 health fairs, open houses, poster contests, unbirthdays parties,  
18 clothesline projects, memorial gardens and other initiatives to  
19 raise awareness of infant mortality and prevention; and

20 WHEREAS, The recognition and observance of "Infant Mortality  
21 Awareness Month" by groups such as Healthy Start, Inc., will  
22 increase national awareness of infant mortality, promote  
23 awareness of the contributing factors of infant mortality and  
24 encourage education in local communities about preventable  
25 negative birth outcomes; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of September  
27 2012 as "Infant Mortality Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania and  
28 commend organizations such as Healthy Start, Inc., for their  
29 important role in addressing this public health issue.