

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 283 Session of 2020

INTRODUCED BY BAKER, MARTIN, J. WARD, MUTH, STREET, IOVINO,  
FONTANA, COLLETT, COSTA, PHILLIPS-HILL, BROWNE, DINNIMAN,  
BARTOLOTTA, MENSCH, BREWSTER AND BLAKE, JANUARY 27, 2020

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, JANUARY 27, 2020

## A RESOLUTION

1 Designating January 23, 2020, as "Maternal Health Awareness Day"  
2 in Pennsylvania to recognize all women who die from  
3 complications of pregnancy or childbirth.

4 WHEREAS, Pregnancy-related death is defined by the number of  
5 women who die during pregnancy, or within one year after  
6 childbirth, from any cause that is related to or aggravated by  
7 the pregnancy; and

8 WHEREAS, The number of pregnancy-related deaths in the United  
9 States has continued to rise, despite recent advances in medical  
10 science and technology; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1986, the Centers for Disease Control and  
12 Prevention (CDC) implemented a Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance  
13 System to obtain information about the frequency and causes of  
14 pregnancy-related death in the United States; and

15 WHEREAS, Despite declines in maternal deaths in other parts  
16 of the world, the data collected under the Pregnancy Mortality  
17 Surveillance System has shown a steady increase in the number of  
18 reported pregnancy-related deaths in the United States from a

low of 7.2 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1987 to 16.9 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2016; and

WHEREAS, The Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System indicates that the rate of pregnancy-related deaths varies by race, ethnicity and age, with the highest mortality ratio being evidenced among black women who suffered 42.4 deaths per every 100,000 live births; and

WHEREAS, The CDC recommends maternal deaths be investigated through state-based reviews to identify the causes of pregnancy-related deaths and recommend ways to decrease maternal deaths; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly approved, and the Governor signed, Act 24 of 2018, known as the Maternal Mortality Review Act, establishing the multidisciplinary Maternal Mortality Review Committee as a first step to address the serious issue of increasing maternal mortality across this Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, The committee is tasked with examining pregnancy-related deaths, developing prevention recommendations and increasing public and professional awareness of the incidence of pregnancy-related deaths and strategies to prevent maternal deaths in this Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, According to recent CDC data, approximately 700 women die annually in the United States from pregnancy-related complications, with one-third of pregnancy-related deaths occurring from one week up to a year after birth and approximately three in five pregnancy-related deaths were preventable; and

WHEREAS, The weeks following birth, known as the "fourth trimester," are a critical period for a woman and her infant, setting the stage for long-term health and well-being, and to

1 optimize the health of women and infants, postpartum care should  
2 become an ongoing process rather than a single encounter, with  
3 services and support tailored to each woman's individual needs;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, There is a need to educate health care providers and  
6 patients on the importance of attending postpartum visits and  
7 leveraging postpartum care as a doorway to future health; and

8 WHEREAS, In order to improve public and professional  
9 awareness of the issues related to maternal health and mortality  
10 and promote the various promising initiatives that are being  
11 undertaken to reduce maternal mortality from the beginning of  
12 pregnancy and beyond, it is both reasonable and appropriate to  
13 designate a day as "Maternal Health Awareness Day" in this  
14 Commonwealth; and

15 WHEREAS, Community members and health care professionals are  
16 invited to participate in appropriate activities relating to  
17 maternal health, safety and mortality on "Maternal Health  
18 Awareness Day"; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate January 23, 2020, as  
20 "Maternal Health Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania to recognize all  
21 women who die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.