
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 354 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY MUTH, FONTANA, STREET, SANTARSIERO, DINNIMAN,
COLLETT, SCHWANK, BREWSTER, TARTAGLIONE, COSTA, KEARNEY,
L. WILLIAMS, HUGHES AND IOVINO, SEPTEMBER 3, 2020

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, SEPTEMBER 3, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating September 23, 2020, as "Fourth Trimester Care Day"
2 in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, The current practice of our health care system is to
4 provide focused care during pregnancy and birth, with weekly
5 checkups in the final weeks of gestation; yet a new mother is
6 often afforded a single follow-up visit, generally six weeks
7 after the baby is born; and

8 WHEREAS, It is understood that a child's healthy development
9 for their first few years of life is a crucial factor in
10 creating positive outcomes for the rest of their life; and

11 WHEREAS, The well-being of mother and infant are intimately
12 connected and therefore rather than treat them as separate
13 entities, their care should be understood as mutually
14 beneficial, with the needs of the one considered in the context
15 of the needs of the other; and

16 WHEREAS, A mother undergoes a period of substantial
17 transformation and adaptation, particularly through the first

1 three months of motherhood, simultaneously experiencing
2 physical, hormonal and psychosocial changes as well as shifting
3 roles and responsibilities; and

4 WHEREAS, This period of transition should be recognized as
5 the Fourth Trimester, a time during which mothers are deserving
6 of care in their own right; and

7 WHEREAS, Mothers may suffer a number of physical health
8 issues during the Fourth Trimester that far too often go
9 undiagnosed and therefore, untreated; and

10 WHEREAS, Some of the health issues mothers have reported
11 experiencing include: breastfeeding problems, infections,
12 physical exhaustion, sleep loss, depression and stress, anxiety
13 and rage, loneliness, frequent headaches, heavy bleeding,
14 backache, weight control, pelvic and coccyx pain, urinary and
15 fecal incontinence, diastasis recti, pelvic organ prolapse, scar
16 tissue pain from either cesarean, episiotomy or natural tearing,
17 hemorrhoids, pubic symphysis separation and painful intercourse;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Physical issues resulting from childbirth can also
20 affect the mental health of new mothers and, in turn, their
21 ability to provide care and nurturing for their babies as well
22 as full return to the workforce and activity engagement; and

23 WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and
24 Prevention, about one in nine mothers in the United States
25 experience symptoms of postpartum depression and anxiety; and

26 WHEREAS, All major medical organizations recommend six months
27 of exclusive breastfeeding, recognizing that the practice of
28 breastfeeding is associated with positive health outcomes for
29 both mother and infant; and

30 WHEREAS, Only 21% of mothers are able to achieve the

1 recommended six months of exclusive breastfeeding, a statistic
2 that results, in part, from social constraints such as unpaid
3 maternity leave, negative attitudes toward nursing in public and
4 lack of workplace accommodations for breastfeeding mothers; and

5 WHEREAS, Twenty-three percent of employed mothers have to
6 return to work within 10 days postpartum despite evidence
7 supporting tissue healing requires six weeks thus, compounding
8 health issues and making it even more difficult to fulfill all
9 of their roles and responsibilities; and

10 WHEREAS, For the sake of the health and well-being of both
11 mother and infant, a mother should receive the mental, physical,
12 social and economic support she needs to successfully transition
13 through this all-important, consequential Fourth Trimester
14 period; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize September 23, 2020, as
16 "Fourth Trimester Care Day" in Pennsylvania.