



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

- WHEREAS: Over 60% of pregnancy deaths are preventable, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black women in the United States are 3-4 times more likely than white women to die from pregnancy-related causes; and
- WHEREAS: While just 6.3% of Minnesotans are Black, Black women represent 22.9% of the maternal deaths in our state; and
- WHEREAS: Black women suffer from life threatening complications known as maternal morbidities at a rate of twice that of white women; and
- WHEREAS: The high rates of maternal mortality among Black women span across income levels, education levels, socioeconomic status, access to prenatal care, general overall health, and mental health and substance use disorder status; and
- WHEREAS: The state of Minnesota recognizes that structural racism, gender oppression, and inequities in the social determinants of health are embedded in many institutions and contribute to unacceptable and preventable disparities in Black maternal health outcomes; and
- WHEREAS: The Black Maternal Health Caucus was founded in the Minnesota House of Representatives in 2021 and its members have worked tirelessly to bring attention and action to this issue in the Minnesota State Legislature and across the state; and
- WHEREAS: Black Maternal Health Week is an opportunity to acknowledge the tragic deaths of Black women in our state and across the country who lost their lives to pregnancy related complications and to raise awareness of the state's preventable and unacceptable disparities in Black maternal health outcomes; and
- WHEREAS: Black Maternal Health Week is also a time to stand in solidarity, recognizing that this issue impacts Black mothers, Indigenous mothers, and other mothers of color, as well as trans people, gender expansive people, families, communities, and practitioners, who all experience the weight of systemic bias. It is our job to uplift community-based responses to addressing this crisis and to promote initiatives to reduce Black maternal morbidity and mortality; and
- WHEREAS: Through the One Minnesota Healthy Beginnings goal and the collective efforts around the state led by Black women, providers, community leaders, and families, we can work towards eliminating disparities in our maternal healthcare system; and
- WHEREAS: We affirm the need to improve our maternal care systems and invest in improving Black maternal health outcomes, as well as the need to acknowledge the historical and systemic exploitation of Black bodies within the medical field and to encourage practitioners to listen to and believe Black women seeking medical care.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TIM WALZ, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim the week of April 11-17, 2022, as:

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

in the State of Minnesota.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 8th day of April.

Handwritten signature of Tim Walz in black ink.

GOVERNOR

Handwritten signature of Steve Simon in black ink.

SECRETARY OF STATE