

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 1581

Expressing support for the designation of “Prematurity Awareness Month”.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 19, 2024

Ms. McCLELLAN (for herself, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. ALLRED, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CISCOMANI, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. CRAIG, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LAWLER, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCGARVEY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TOKUDA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. WEXTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of “Prematurity Awareness Month”.

Whereas the United States is in the midst of a maternal and infant health crisis, with nearly every measure of the health of pregnant women, new mothers, and infants living in the United States going in the wrong direction;

Whereas the United States remains one of the most dangerous places to give birth among high-income countries,

and there are unacceptable disparities in birth outcomes for women and infants of color;

Whereas women living in maternity care deserts and counties with low access to care have poorer health before pregnancy, receive less prenatal care, and experience higher rates of preterm birth;

Whereas there have been an excess of over 10,000 preterm births among those living in maternity care deserts and limited access counties in 2020 through 2022;

Whereas, while other countries have reduced their maternal mortality rates since the 1990s, the United States maternal mortality rate continues to rise;

Whereas maternal health outcomes are getting worse and are driven by disparities, with Black and American Indian and Alaska Native women dying at nearly 3 times the rate of White women;

Whereas 80 percent of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable;

Whereas the number of women who experience pregnancy-related complications in the United States is steadily increasing, affecting at least 50,000 women per year;

Whereas, approximately 383,000 babies were born preterm in 2021, and preterm birth rates are at the highest level since 2007;

Whereas prematurity is the leading cause of newborn death and disability among infants, including intellectual and developmental delays, behavioral problems, neurological disorders, chronic respiratory problems, and vision and hearing impairment;

Whereas preterm birth accounts for 35.8 percent of infant deaths in the United States;

Whereas maternal health outcomes are getting worse, and Black and Native American women are 62 percent more likely to have a preterm birth, and their babies are twice as likely to die as compared to White women;

Whereas the annual societal economic cost of preterm birth is an estimated \$25,200,000,000;

Whereas preterm births can be prevented through research and evidence-based public health programs focused on reducing risk factors, improving social determinants of health, and eliminating social and structural disparities;

Whereas families face serious health risks and adverse outcomes while the health advocacy community fights for the health of all families by supporting research, leading programs, highlighting and addressing disparities, and providing education and advocacy; and

Whereas November 2024 marks the 21st anniversary of “Prematurity Awareness Month”: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) expresses support for the designation of  
3       “Prematurity Awareness Month”; and

4               (2) calls on the people of the United States, in-  
5       terest groups, and affected people to—

6               (A) observe “Prematurity Awareness  
7       Month” with appropriate events and activities;

8               (B) take an active role in promoting  
9       awareness; and

- 1 (C) encourage parents and communities to
- 2 support preterm birth prevention programs.

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