



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 21-2702, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK AND MINORITY HEALTH MONTH IN COOK COUNTY

WHEREAS, the month of April is National Minority Health Month, a month-long initiative to advance health equity across the country on behalf of all racial and ethnic minorities; and

WHEREAS, in solidarity with National Minority Health Month, the week of April 11-17 is Black Maternal Health Week in the United States, it is a week of awareness, activism, and community building intended to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health in the US; amplify community-driven policy, research, and care solutions; center the voices of Black Mamas, women, families, and stakeholders; provide a national platform for Black-led entities and efforts on maternal health, birth and reproductive justice; and enhance community organizing on Black maternal health; and

WHEREAS, Black women in the United States experience unacceptably poor maternal health outcomes, including disproportionately high rates of death related to pregnancy or childbirth, and are three to four times more likely to experience a pregnancy-related death than white women, and Illinois has maternal death statistics even higher than the national average with Black women in Illinois six times as likely to die of a pregnancy-related condition than white women; and

WHEREAS, Black women are more likely to experience preventable maternal death compared with white women, and Black women's heightened risk of pregnancy-related death spans income and education levels; and

WHEREAS, both societal and health system factors contribute to the high rates of poor health outcomes and maternal mortality for Black women, who are more likely to experience barriers to obtaining quality care and often face racial discrimination throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS, public policies and medical practice should incentivize providing patient-centered care that focuses on Black women's individualized needs, including non-clinical, social needs. Moreover, policies should endeavor to eradicate cultural biases and discrimination in medical practice and medical education, increase provider diversity in maternity care and hold individual providers and hospital systems accountable if they fail to provide unbiased, high-quality, evidence-based care; and

WHEREAS, African American & Latinx communities have endured historically bad treatment with our healthcare system, and National Minority Health Month is a time to re-double our efforts to improve this system by listening to their concerns and work to build the trust that was lost over generations of poor treatment; and

WHEREAS, not unsurprisingly, there has been unprecedented level of disparities in healthcare outcomes during the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic in the African American and Latinx Communities in Chicago and Cook County, and across the country in part due to the social determinants of health such as lack of access to quality healthcare, housing, education, and employment among others, which has caused black and brown communities to be disproportionately impacted by some of the underlying conditions that have affected the severity of the virus, including chronic kidney and cardiovascular diseases, diabetes; and

WHEREAS, due to the pandemic, this year's theme for National Minority Health Month is **#VaccineReady**, and Cook County has been a leader in ensuring that our vaccination plan is equity focused with 32 municipalities that are part of its equity distribution programs located mostly in the west and south suburbs of Cook County, predominantly in communities of color that have been most adversely impacted by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, getting the Covid-19 vaccine is vital so that minority communities do not get left behind as we begin to focus on economic recovery and build towards a more equitable future; and

WHEREAS, this Honorable Body wishes to promote and raise awareness of National Minority Health Month and Black Maternal Health Week in Cook County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the more than 5.2 million residents of Cook County, do hereby take this opportunity to acknowledge National Minority Health Month and Black Maternal Health Week; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in conjunction with National Minority Health Month, that the month of April be hereby declared Minority Health Month in the County of Cook, and the week of April 11-17 be declared Black Maternal Health Week in the County of Cook; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body.