

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 718

Designating the week of July 19 through July 25, 2022, as “Black Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week” and supporting the goal of raising awareness and understanding around maternal mental health conditions as they affect Black individuals.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 25, 2022

Mr. OSSOFF submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary

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## RESOLUTION

Designating the week of July 19 through July 25, 2022, as “Black Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week” and supporting the goal of raising awareness and understanding around maternal mental health conditions as they affect Black individuals.

Whereas 1 in 8 women and 1 in 6 Black women will suffer from a maternal mental health condition at some point during their lifetimes;

Whereas maternal mental health and substance use disorder conditions initially present during pregnancy or the year following childbirth, stillbirth, or miscarriage, and include depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, psychosis, and other conditions;

Whereas suicide and overdose caused by a maternal mental health or substance use disorder condition contribute to the rising maternal mortality rate;

Whereas non-Hispanic Black individuals are 3 times more likely to have a maternal death than White individuals in the United States;

Whereas untreated maternal mental health conditions cost the United States economy \$14,200,000,000 each year due to productivity loss, preterm births, child behavioral and developmental costs, and other health-related costs;

Whereas maternal mental health conditions impair mother-infant interactions causing negative behavioral, cognitive, and emotional impacts on the infant;

Whereas untreated maternal depression during pregnancy leads to a higher risk of preterm and low birth weight delivery and infant mortality;

Whereas many health professionals receive limited or no formal training on providing culturally appropriate maternity care in diverse communities;

Whereas 50 percent of individuals with a maternal mental health condition never receive treatment, and Black women are less likely than White women to access or continue treatment, or refill a prescription for a maternal mental health condition;

Whereas best practices for the prevention and treatment of maternal mental health conditions include collaborative and culturally and linguistically appropriate models of group prenatal or postpartum care;

Whereas addressing maternal mental health conditions is integral in reaching the Healthy People 2030 goals of the Department of Health and Human Services of a 10 per-

cent reduction of the maternal mortality rate, maternal illnesses and complications due to pregnancy, and the preterm live birth rate; and

Whereas more research on Black maternal mental health outcomes and care, existing State and other programs, and innovative maternity care models designed to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes is needed to inform evidence-based treatments, promote prevention and recovery support efforts, facilitate early identification, dispel stigmas and barriers to care, and provide insight on illness causation and the effects of maternal mental health conditions on infants and communities: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) designates the week of July 19 through  
3       July 25, 2022, as “Black Maternal Mental Health  
4       Awareness Week”;

5               (2) supports the goals and ideals of Black Ma-  
6       ternal Mental Health Awareness Week to raise pub-  
7       lic awareness and understanding around maternal  
8       mental health conditions and their disproportionate  
9       impact on Black women and families;

10              (3) recognizes the need for culturally and lin-  
11       guistically appropriate prevention, intervention,  
12       treatment, and recovery support services for individ-  
13       uals affected by maternal mental health conditions;

14              (4) acknowledges the need for further research  
15       on maternal mental health treatment models that

1       are effective in reducing racial and ethnic disparities  
2       in health outcomes; and

3           (5) encourages Federal, State, and local govern-  
4       ments and citizens of the United States—

5           (A) to support Black Maternal Mental  
6       Health Awareness Week through programs and  
7       activities; and

8           (B) to promote public awareness of mater-  
9       nal mental health conditions as those conditions  
10      affect Black individuals.

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