

[~118HR1581]

.....
(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. _____

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. McCLELLAN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

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 liv-
ing in the United States going in the wrong direction;

Whereas the United States remains one of the most dan-
gerous 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 preg-

nancy, 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 2021 through 2023;

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

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 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states that 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 more than 50,000 women per year;

Whereas, more than 370,000 babies, or 1 in 10 babies, were born preterm in 2022, and preterm birth rates are among 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 preterm birth, along with low birth weight babies, make up the second leading cause of infant deaths after birth defects;

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 families of preterm infants often face significant emotional and financial burdens due to extended neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) stays and ongoing healthcare needs;

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

Whereas preterm birth can be triggered by multiple, interacting biologic and environmental factors;

Whereas preterm births can be prevented through fully staffed and funded investments in 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 2025 marks the 22nd 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—

- 1 (A) observe “Prematurity Awareness
- 2 Month” with appropriate events and activities;
- 3 (B) take an active role in promoting
- 4 awareness; and
- 5 (C) encourage parents and communities to
- 6 support preterm birth prevention programs.