

Wilmington, Delaware
June 2, 2022

#0175

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Darby**

WHEREAS, House Bill No. 340 (HB No. 340), “An Act to Amend Title 31 Of Delaware Code Relating to Child and Maternal Mortality,” proposes to expand the duties of the Child Death Review Commission to improve the health community’s understanding of maternal morbidity, mortality and racial disparities. It also updates the definition of “maternal death” to include deaths during pregnancy, up to one year after delivery, as well as fatalities “aggravated by” pregnancy or birth, such as death by suicide; and

WHEREAS, the United States has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality among developed countries. There are also significant racial disparities. Nationally, African American mothers are twice as likely to receive late or no prenatal care compared with White mothers. Black women die from pregnancy-related complications at two to three times the rate of White women, Asian/Pacific Islander women, and Hispanic women. In 2018, Black mothers lost their infants four times more often to low-birth-weight complications and two times more often to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) than non-Hispanic White mothers; and

WHEREAS, in Delaware, severe maternal morbidity rose by 37 percent in recent years. Evidence of racial disparities at the state level mirror national health outcomes. Black women die from pregnancy-related complications three to four times more often than White women. Delaware ranked 14th in the country for infant mortality in 2017. Between 2014 and 2018, Delaware’s Black infants died at a rate of 12.2 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared with 4.5 deaths per 1,000 live births for White infants. Babies born to African American women are 2.7 times more likely to die than babies born to White women; and

WHEREAS, the proportion of low birth weight infants in New Castle County surpasses all other counties in the State of Delaware. Most of the State’s population growth is concentrated in the City of Wilmington. There were 71.2 births per 1,000, the most statewide. More than one in ten Wilmington babies had low birth weights from 2014 to 2018.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the Council is in favor of HB No. 340 which aims to amend Title 31 of the Delaware Code on child and maternal mortality.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council encourages members of the Delaware General Assembly to support the passage of HB No. 340.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution expresses strong support from the Wilmington City Council for the passage of House Bill No. 340 which expands the duties of the Child Death Review Commission to improve the health community’s understanding of maternal morbidity, mortality, and racial disparities. This will improve the quality of maternal health care and ensure full access to reduce preventable pregnancy-related deaths and better child and maternal health outcomes.