

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON, JULIA MEJIA, ARROYO, BAKER, BOK, BREADON, COLETTA, DURKAN, FLAHERTY, LARA, MURPHY, WORRELL AND FLYNN



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING BLACK BREASTFEEDING WEEK

**WHEREAS,** The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) has recently recognized Black Breastfeeding Week as an annual celebration at the end of August. Black Breastfeeding Week seeks to improve Black breastfeeding rates as a means to address wider racial inequities in maternal and infant health; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Breastfeeding is an important way to support children's health and development during their first two years. Breast milk contains nutrients and antibodies that help babies grow and protect against illness. According to the CDC, only 25% of infants born in 2020 were exclusively breastfed in their first six months of life, and most families do not breastfeed babies through the first two years, as strongly recommended by the CDC, WHO, and the American Academy of Pediatrics; *and*

**WHEREAS,** There are lower rates of breastfeeding at six months and one year in Black families compared to white counterparts, as well as lower rates of breastfeeding initiation and exclusive breastfeeding. These disparities are perpetuated by differential access to education about breastfeeding, breastfeeding support, and breastfeeding-friendly work environments and other spaces; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The gap in breastfeeding rates is part of a wider landscape of inequity in maternal and infant health in Boston. Despite proximity to some of the nation's best health centers, in 2021 Black residents in Boston experienced an infant mortality rate of 9.7 deaths per 1,000 live births – more than twice the citywide average. Mattapan had the most babies born at a low birthweight in the city. And neighborhoods with higher concentrations of Black residents had significantly worse maternal health outcomes compared to others; *and*

**WHEREAS,** By improving Black breastfeeding rates, we can help ensure that Black infants are in the best position to grow and thrive, and can contribute to reducing an unacceptable disparity in health outcomes in the City of Boston. **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED:** That the Boston City Council join the BPHC in recognizing Black Breastfeeding Week, an annual celebration that takes place at the end of August, and that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Massachusetts Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House of Representatives to serve as an expression of the City of Boston's commitment to improving Black maternal and infant health and supporting Boston families.