

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia and Kendra Lara, Richardo Arroyo, BAKER, BOK, BREADON, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FLAHERTY, LOUIJEUNE, MURPHY, WORRELL and FLYNN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE OUT-OF-HOSPITAL BIRTH ACCESS AND SAFETY ACT (H.2341/S.1519) AND RECOGNIZING BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS,** Home birth rates have risen dramatically over the past several years, with a new Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report showing that between 2019 and 2020, home birth rates rose 22% across the country, 36% among Black birthing people in the United States, and 47% in Massachusetts alone; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Out-of-hospital birth (home, birth center) is safe, beneficial, and a valid reproductive choice that is currently denied to most birthing people in Massachusetts; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Certified Professional Midwives, who attend low-risk births in homes and birth centers are NOT licensed in Massachusetts, despite being licensed in 37 other states; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Black Maternal Health Week is an opportunity to celebrate Black birthing people, but also a time to examine the historic and systemic inequities that have led and continue to lead to the risk of death and severe morbidity being two times as likely for Black birthing people compared to their white counterparts, according to the Department of Public Health; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Out-of-Hospital Birth Access, and Safety Act (H.2341/S.1519), sponsored by Representatives Kay Khan and Rebecca Raush respectively, seeks to establish within the Department of Public Health a licensing process for professional midwives and add them as Medicaid/MassHealth providers; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Bay State Birth Coalition is leading a group of organizations for women's rights, civil rights, birth rights, and reproductive health to support the Out-of-Hospital Birth Access and Safety Act, that includes the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, Health Care for All Massachusetts, League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, MassNOW, Mass Postpartum Depression Fund, Our Bodies Ourselves, Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund, Reproductive Equity Now, Resilient Sisterhood Project, the Union of Minority Neighborhoods, Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts, Young Women's Christian Association of Southeastern Massachusetts, Amnesty

International, Birth Rights Bar Association, Every Mother Counts, MomsRising, National Partnership for Women and Families, and midwifery organizations (National Association of Certified Professional Midwives, North American Registry of Midwives, and the American College of Nurse-Midwives); *and*

WHEREAS, Passing this legislation is crucial for supporting birthing persons, closing critical safety gaps, expanding access to out-of-hospital birthing options, meeting people where they are, and accommodating the needs of birthing persons to ensure that they feel comfortable, safe, and well taken care of; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council has an obligation to uplift and validate the lived experiences of birthing persons, especially persons who experience the intersections of race and sex in the birthing space; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED, That the Boston City Council offers its support for the Out-of-Hospital Birth Access and Safety Act (H.2341/S.1519), and that the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward suitably engrossed copies of this resolution to Speaker of the House Ron Mariano, Speaker Pro Tempore Kate Hogan, Senate President Karen Spilka, Senate Majority Leader Cynthia Stone Creem, and bill sponsors Representative Kay Khan and Senator Becca Rausch, as well as the entire Boston delegation; ***AND BE IT FURTHER***

RESOLVED, That the Boston City Council recognizes April 11-17 as Black Maternal Health Week in the City of Boston.

Filed in Council: April 8, 2022