



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New York State places a high priority on women's health issues – especially maternal health – and recognizes that all women deserve access to the highest quality health care before and during pregnancy, throughout the birth experience, and in the post-delivery period; the family of New Yorkers cares about maternal health outcomes for women of all backgrounds and supports initiatives that raise awareness of such specific concerns as the racial and ethnic disparities in maternal mortality, particularly the high rates of maternal mortality among Black women which span all levels of income and education, as well as socioeconomic status; and

Whereas, compared to other developed countries, the United States has among the poorest outcomes for mothers, and while in the last ten years New York State has taken steps to reduce maternal mortality rates, there is significant disparity for women of color; in New York State, the maternal mortality rate for Black women was 51.6 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2014-2016, as Black women are approximately three times more likely to die than white women; and

Whereas, the New York State Taskforce on Maternal Mortality and Disparate Racial Outcomes was established in June 2018 as part of a multi-pronged effort to reduce maternal mortality and racial disparities, and to provide policy advice on: improving maternal outcomes, addressing racial and economic disparities, and reducing the frequency of maternal mortality and morbidity in New York State; the Taskforce issued a report in March 2019 with key findings which include that in 2016, New York State was ranked 30th in the nation for its maternal mortality rate, with clear racial disparities; and

Whereas, based on recommendations made by the Taskforce, New York State has committed to begin implementing key initiatives in 2019, which include addressing racism and implicit bias in health care settings, improving data collection on maternal health, and expanding community health worker programs, among others; Black-led organizations and Black care providers grounded in reproductive and birth justice, including community-based doulas, have critical knowledge and expertise to meaningfully address racism and implicit bias, and provide culturally congruent care; and

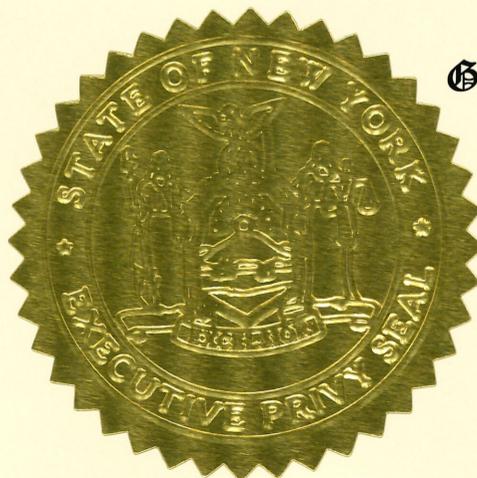
Whereas, New York State stands with the Black Mamas Matter Alliance as they center Black mamas' voices, drive critical research, build community power, and shift culture for Black maternal health, rights, and justice and New York supports "Black Maternal Health Week" – a campaign founded and led by the Black Mamas Matter Alliance; founded in 2008, Black Women's Blueprint is an organization that works to build movements that empower women and girls to achieve social, political, and economic equity, and will further support the work of Black Mamas Matter and Black Maternal Health Week by launching the Sexual Abuse to Maternal Mortality Pipeline: An Institute to Unify Sexual Assault and Reproductive Health Advocates; and

Whereas, every mother and baby in New York State and this entire nation should have the same opportunities to achieve optimal health and positive birth outcomes regardless of race, ethnicity, community of residence, insurance coverage, or hospital of delivery, and all New Yorkers unite in their commitment to reducing the maternal mortality rate among Black women and to eliminating racial disparities in the health outcomes for Black women and babies;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 11-17, 2019 as

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

in the Empire State.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this eighth day of
April in the year two thousand nineteen.


Governor


Secretary to the Governor
Melissa DeRosa