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**LA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PROCLAIMS APRIL 11-17 AS BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK AND APRIL 16 AS THE DAY OF THE BLACK INFANT**

***Motion aims to bring attention to birth justice and the importance of reducing the Black maternal and infant mortality rates in Los Angeles***

(Los Angeles County, CA) Today, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a motion recognizing April 11-17 as Black Maternal Health Week. The motion, brought forward by LA County District 2 Supervisor, Holly Mitchell, is a win for the county’s African American Infant and Maternal Mortality Prevention Initiative (AAIMM), its Steering Committee and Community Action Teams. Launched in late 2018, AAIMM is a coalition of the LA County Alliance for Health Integration (Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, and Health Services), First 5 LA, community organizations, mental and health care providers, funders, and community members.

The AAIMM Initiative mission is to end the unacceptably high rates of Black infant and maternal deaths in Los Angeles County and ensure access to healthy and joyous births for Black families. AAIMM approaches its work by recognizing racism as a root cause of birth inequities faced by the Black community. Black Maternal Health Week was introduced and led nationally by Black Mamas Matter Alliance four years ago and brought to Los Angeles by Black Women for Wellness.

The motion’s text reads:

*“Black Maternal Health Week” (April 11-17, 2021) was established four years ago as a national, weeklong amplification of Black voices regarding the maternal health care crisis in the Black community. Locally, the week is celebrated by bringing attention to reproductive and birth justice and the importance of reducing the rate of Black maternal mortality in Los Angeles County(County). In the County, Black women die due to perinatal complications at four times the rate of White women and Black infants die before their first birthday at more than three times the rate of White infants. High mortality rates among Black women and Black infants span across income and education levels, as well as geography, and place a glaring spotlight on the intersection of historical and structural racism, gender oppression, and inequities in the social determinants of health that contribute to disproportionate stress on Black women/birthing people and result in unequal health outcomes that harm both them and their babies.*

*The Departments of Public Health and Health Services, alongside First 5 LA, launched the African American Infant and Maternal Mortality Prevention Initiative to address birth outcome inequities. The response to this crisis requires stakeholders of all kinds, with Black women in leadership roles, coming together to advance change, practice anti-racism, and ensure access to high quality, comprehensive, culturally relevant reproductive and maternal health care.”*

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By unanimous decision, the Board agreed to “Proclaim the week of April 11-17, 2021 as ’Black Maternal Health Week’ and within that week, April 16, 2021 ‘The Day of the Black Infant’ in Los Angeles County.”

The AAIMM Prevention Initiative and collaborative partners will be hosting a series of virtual events, celebrations, and social media efforts to create awareness about the unjustly high rates of Black infant and maternal deaths in the county, the roles everyone can play to combat discriminatory systems, as well as resources to support Black families so that they can have access to healthy and joyous births. Information will be shared through the initiative’s website ([www.blackinfantsandfamilies.org](http://www.blackinfantsandfamilies.org)) and social media channels (@blackinfantsandfamiliesla).

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