



Established 1771

CHATHAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Proclamation of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners

SUPPORTING BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

WHEREAS, the maternal mortality rate in North Carolina doubled since 2019 and grew at a higher rate for Black women exacerbated by the global pandemic, and

WHEREAS, Black women nationwide, regardless of income or education level, are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy related complications, and

WHEREAS, over eighty percent of pregnancy related deaths are preventable, and

WHEREAS, in Chatham County, infant mortality rates for 2017-2021 are three times higher for Black babies than White babies, and

WHEREAS, the high rates of maternal and infant mortality and morbidity span income levels, education levels, socioeconomic status, access to care, general overall health, and mental health and substance use disorder status, and

WHEREAS, we recognize that structural racism, gender oppression, and inequities in the social determinants of health are embedded in many institutions and contribute to unacceptable and preventable disparities in Black maternal health outcomes, and

WHEREAS, Black women deserve the dignity and respect to have healthy, safe pregnancies and birth experiences with access to care of their choice through being empowered and resourced to make informed decisions based on their needs, and

WHEREAS, Black Maternal Health Week, April 11th through April 17th was founded by the Black Mamas Matter Alliance to increase awareness of the preventable and unacceptable disparities in Black maternal health outcomes around the state and across the nation is an opportunity to promote activism and investment in community-led solutions, and

WHEREAS we affirm the need to improve our maternal care systems and invest in improving Black maternal health outcomes and acknowledge the impact of, and pledge to support, local agencies like UNC Chatham Hospital Maternity Care Center, Chatham County Public Health Department, and Piedmont Health Services Community Health Centers, who are working to address birth inequities in our community, and

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that culturally and linguistically concordant care provided by a diverse and collaborative team of birth workers, health advocates, community organizations, and healthcare providers are a crucial component of eliminating disparities, enhancing Black maternal safety and improving birth and health outcomes, and

WHEREAS, we recognize and uplift community-based responses to addressing this crisis and we promote initiatives that reduce Black maternal morbidity and mortality such as EMBRACe (Equity for Moms and Babies Realized Across Chatham), doula services, midwifery services, peer support, mutual aid, and mental wellness support, and

WHEREAS, in acknowledgement of the fact that urgent attention and action is needed to improve Black maternal health outcomes in Chatham County and across North Carolina.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim April 11th through April 17th of 2024 as Black Maternal Health Week in Chatham County.

BE IT FURTHER, PROCLAIMED, that the Chatham County Board of Commissioners encourages participation in local events and activities to help bring awareness to Black Maternal Health Week in Chatham County including the Chatham County Library's Black Maternal Health Book Display, Black Maternal Health Week Community Conversation, the 2nd Annual EMBRACe Retreat, and Equity Before Births Dance Part for Black Maternal Health Week.

Adopted, this the 18th day of March.

Mike Dasher, Chair
Chatham County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Jenifer K. Johnson, MMC, Clerk to the Board
Chatham County Board of Commissioners