

WHEREAS; from pregnancy to childbirth to postpartum and beyond, ensuring the health and wellness of all mothers and babies is a priority for our state; and

WHEREAS; despite advances in medical science and technology, pregnancy-related complications and deaths continue to occur at high levels in Wisconsin, with social determinants of health, mental health, violence, and substance use disorders as significant contributors; and

WHEREAS; state and national health data tell us that health disparities exist based on race, meaning that, for example, Black mothers in Wisconsin are almost two times more likely than their white peers to experience significant health complications due to labor and delivery, and are five times more likely to die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth; and

WHEREAS; these disparities in health outcomes are not the consequence of individual habits or poor choices, and we must confront the need for increased access to quality maternal healthcare and education in communities of color if we want to build a healthier Wisconsin for all; and

WHEREAS; we recognize the need to improve our maternal care systems, which is why the governor's 2021-23 budget proposal includes the extension of postpartum Medicaid eligibility, the expansion of Medicaid to cover doula services, and an investment in a "Healthy Women, Healthy Babies" initiative to improve birth outcomes in our state, including \$3.5 million for organizations working to reduce disparities related to maternal and infant mortality; and

WHEREAS; Wisconsin also has a longstanding multidisciplinary Maternal Mortality Review Team tasked with reviewing all maternal deaths, developing prevention recommendations and strategies, and increasing public and professional awareness of the incidence of pregnancy-related deaths; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin joins maternal health advocates, organizations, medical professionals, families, and researchers across our state in increasing public and professional awareness of maternal health issues, supporting our state's mothers and babies, and promoting initiatives to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality and eliminate existing disparities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,  
do hereby proclaim March 2021 as

## **MATERNAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance  
to all our state's residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March 2021.



TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:



DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE, Secretary of State