



Solano County

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Legislation Text

File #: 19-798, **Version:** 1

Adopt and present a resolution recognizing November 2019 as Prematurity Awareness Month in Solano County to increase public awareness regarding the impact of premature births (Supervisor Vasquez)

Published Notice Required? Yes ___ No X

Public Hearing Required? Yes ___ No X

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Health & Social Services recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt and present a resolution recognizing November 2019 as Prematurity Awareness Month in Solano County to increase public awareness regarding the impact of premature births.

SUMMARY:

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the California Department of Public Health and March of Dimes recognize November each year as Prematurity Awareness Month. The Department of Health & Social Services, Public Health Division, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Bureau joins these organizations in recognizing November 2019 as Prematurity Awareness Month to increase public awareness regarding the impact of premature births and steps Solano County residents can take to reduce risks. This resolution acknowledges the commitment to reduce rates of premature births and the need to follow recommendations for healthy pregnancies to promote and protect the health of women, infants and their families.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The staff time associated with preparing this Board Item and planning Prematurity Awareness activities is included in the Department's FY2019/20 Adopted Budget. There is no additional impact to the County General Fund.

DISCUSSION:

During the month of November 2019, the Department of Health & Social Services, Public Health Division, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Bureau will sponsor activities in Solano County to promote awareness and prevention of premature births. Together with the CDC and CDPH, the MCAH Bureau recognizes that prematurity should be addressed as a significant public health issue.

Prematurity, also referred to as preterm or premature birth, is defined as the live birth of a baby before 37 weeks of pregnancy. While preterm labor and delivery can happen to any pregnant woman, certain lifestyle and environmental factors and certain health issues may increase a woman's risk for preterm labor. Risk factors for preterm birth include late or no prenatal care, pregnancy with multiple babies, certain uterine or cervical abnormalities, prior preterm delivery, diabetes, high blood pressure or other health issues, lack of social support, toxic stress, long hours of work with prolonged periods of standing, and smoking, drinking or using drugs.

Premature births and complications associated with preterm birth are the largest contributors to infant death in the U.S. and globally. Provisional data for 2017 show that the U.S. preterm birth rates have increased for the

third year in a row, from 9.5 to 9.9 percent of births, with more than 480,000 babies born in the U.S. delivering before 37 weeks of pregnancy. In Solano County, eight of every one hundred births (8%) are preterm and approximately seven of every one hundred (7%) are termed low birth weight, which is a weight less than 2,500 grams at birth. Consequences of prematurity can be deep and long-lasting for babies, their families and society. Babies born too early may have more health problems or may need to stay in the hospital longer than full-term babies.

The March of Dimes Premature Birth Report Card reveals racial/ethnic and geographic disparities signifying that babies have a higher chance of a premature birth based on race/ethnicity and zip code. There are significant disparities in rates of preterm birth between race and ethnic groups nationally and locally. Specific causes for this disparity are not completely understood; even accounting for known risk factors, preterm rate disparities between White and Black infants persist. This difference in prematurity rates contributes to a higher Black infant mortality rate.

According to the most current Solano County data, the Black prematurity rate was 10.4% in 2017. The Asian rate was 8.8% and the Hispanic rate was 7.7%. However, rates continue to be higher for Black infants in Solano County (10.4% in 2017). Solano County has seen improvements in rates of women entering prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy, from 71.3% in 2006 to 80.9% in 2017. Solano County has been successful at improving rates of early prenatal care for women insured by Medi-Cal, from 49.8% in 2006 to 71.6% in 2017.

Beginning in July 2019, the Solano County Black Infant Health Program began restructuring to offer services that more effectively address Black/White disparities in birth rates. Using a three-pronged approach to its services, Black Infant Health is now able to offer: intensive home visitation services through the evidence-based, Healthy Families America model; group services; and, systems change efforts through the Solano HEALS (Health Equity for African American/Black Lives in Solano) community initiative. Goals of Solano's Black Infant Health Program are to improve the health of African American women and babies, decrease health and social inequities, and empower Black women to lead healthier lives and make positive connections to their culture, community and services.

The MCAH Bureau and its community partners have consistently worked to improve birth outcomes for infants in Solano County, including reducing the number of premature births. Ongoing initiatives and programs working to improve birth outcomes and reduce rates of prematurity in Solano County include the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program, Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families Solano, Black Infant Health Program, Solano HEALS and District Nursing. Each of these programs encourages women to seek early prenatal care and addresses barriers to accessing care.

In November, the MCAH Bureau will continue to encourage all women to see a doctor within the first three months of their pregnancy in order to give their baby a healthy start. The MCAH Bureau provides information about prenatal care through social media, local health fairs, community events, access to enroll in home visiting programs and collaboration with community agencies.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose not to recognize November 2019 as Prematurity Awareness Month in Solano County. This is not recommended as this resolution encourages and supports awareness of the availability and need for education, research and risk-reduction activities related to prematurity prevention.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Partner agencies joining the Department's MCAH Bureau in efforts to prevent premature births include Solano County prenatal care providers participating in the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program, Partnership

HealthPlan of California, Solano Home Visiting Community Advisory Board, Kaiser Permanente, Touro University, La Clinica de la Raza, First 5 Solano, Fighting Back Partnership, Neighborhood Rising, New Dawn Vallejo, Solano Coalition for Better Health, Planned Parenthood, Fruits of My Labor, Divine Birthright, Hatch, Women, Infants & Children, and More Excellent Way.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION