SENATE RESOLUTION No. 60

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE
District 19 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Urges enactment of federal "Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A SENATE RESOLUTION urging the enactment of the federal "Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017."

WHEREAS, The United States is ranked 50th in the world for its maternal mortality rate, and is one of eight countries in which the maternal mortality rate has been on the rise; and

WHEREAS, Recent studies have found that the estimated maternal mortality rate in the United States increased by approximately 27 percent between 2000 and 2014, with the rate increasing in nearly every state in the country; and

WHEREAS, Maternal deaths in the United States result from pregnancy-related causes such as hemorrhage, hypertensive disease, preeclampsia, embolic disease, and sepsis, addiction-related causes such as substance use disorder and overdose, and violent causes, including motor vehicle accidents, homicide, and suicide; and

WHEREAS, The most severe complications of pregnancy, generally referred to as severe maternal morbidity, affect more than 65,000 women in the United States each year; and

WHEREAS, Data from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows African-American women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications or childbirth than White women and women of other races; and

WHEREAS, These statistics are a source of great concern for the CDC, health care providers, and patient advocacy organizations such as the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, and the Preeclampsia Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Systemic reviews of maternal pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths are essential in determining strategies for developing prevention efforts, identifying at-risk populations, and understanding how to support expectant mothers and make pregnancy and the postpartum period safer; and

WHEREAS, The CDC recommends that maternal deaths be investigated through State maternal mortality review committees; and

WHEREAS, The committees include obstetricians and neonatologists from private and public health care settings and representatives of relevant academic, health, social service, policy, and community-based organizations, and make recommendations for preventing pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated complications and deaths and identifying ways to improve quality of care for women and children; and

WHEREAS, Currently, fewer than 25 states conduct systemic reviews of maternal deaths or have standing maternal mortality review committees; and

WHEREAS, A bill pending before the United States Congress, S.1112, the federal "Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017," would require the CDC to support states and federally recognized Indian

tribes and tribal organizations in saving and sustaining the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postpartum period, eliminating disparities in maternal health outcomes, assessing the various factors that may contribute to maternal mortality, including quality of care and systemic problems in the delivery of health care, identifying solutions to address these factors, and developing appropriate interventions to reduce and prevent maternal deaths; and

WHEREAS, Under the provisions of S.1112, the CDC is required to establish a grant program through which states and federally recognized Indian tribes and tribal organizations would receive funds to establish maternal mortality review committees; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of these committees would be to collect data on pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths and make recommendations on improving maternal health before, during, and after pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, The enactment of S.1112 will enable states and the federal government to share responsibility in identifying opportunities for improving care, reducing disparities, and implementing system changes relating to maternal health care, and to educate health care providers, pregnant women, their families, and the public about preventing pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated complications and deaths; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The United States Congress is respectfully urged to enact S.1112, the "Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017" in order to enable states and the federal government to share responsibility in identifying opportunities for improving care, reducing disparities, and implementing system changes relating to maternal health care, and to educate health care providers, pregnant women, their families, and the public about preventing pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated complications and deaths.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly, to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and to every member of New Jersey's congressional delegation.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the United States Congress to enact S.1112, the "Maternal Health Accountability Act of 2017," in order to enable states and the federal government to share responsibility in

identifying opportunities for improving care, reducing disparities, and implementing system changes relating to maternal health care, and to educate health care providers, pregnant women, their families, and the public about preventing pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated complications and deaths.