

**Resolution Supporting Targeted Action to Address Black Maternal Health
Disparities in Washington State**
(adopted Aug. 8, 2026)

Whereas Washington State has taken meaningful steps to strengthen maternal healthcare through expanded doula access, postpartum care, birthworker support, and broader maternal health initiatives; and

Whereas despite these broader investments, Black women and Black birthing people continue to experience disproportionate rates of maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, infant mortality, pregnancy-related complications, medical dismissal, and adverse birth outcomes compared to white patients; and

Whereas broad maternal health improvements alone do not automatically eliminate racial disparities caused by systemic racism, implicit bias, lack of culturally responsive care, underrepresentation of Black healthcare professionals, and unequal treatment within healthcare systems; and

Whereas persistent disparities demonstrate the need for targeted, measurable, and community-informed strategies that specifically address the experiences of Black women, Black birthing people, Black families, and Black maternal health professionals in Washington State; and

Whereas Black-led maternal health organizations, Black doulas, Black midwives, Black birthworkers, Black physicians, healthcare professionals, and community advocates play a critical role in improving trust, safety, advocacy, culturally responsive care, accountability, and maternal health outcomes,

Therefore, be it resolved that the 42nd LD Democrats supports continued maternal healthcare investments while affirming that broad maternal health reforms must be paired with targeted action to reduce and eliminate Black maternal and infant health disparities; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the 42nd LD Democrats supports increased investment in Black-led maternal health organizations, Black doulas, Black midwives, Black birthworkers, Black physicians, culturally responsive care initiatives, maternal mental health services, and workforce development efforts that directly support Black mothers, Black birthing people, and Black families; and

Therefore, be it finally resolved that the 42nd LD Democrats supports stronger accountability, equity data collection, anti-bias training, provider accountability, patient advocacy protections, and community-informed maternal healthcare policies designed to address racial disparities and unequal treatment within Washington State healthcare systems, and calls upon Washington State elected officials, healthcare institutions, insurers, agencies, and policymakers to move beyond broad maternal health improvements alone and adopt targeted, measurable strategies to close the Black-white maternal health disparity gap in Washington State.

Supporting Citations

1. Maternal Mortality Review Panel

Source/Publication: Washington State Department of Health

Author: Washington State Department of Health / Maternal Mortality Review Panel Date: 2025

<https://doh.wa.gov/public-health-provider-resources/public-health-system-resources-and-services/maternal-mortality-review-panel>

2. Department of Health Releases 2025 Maternal Mortality Review Panel Report Source/Publication: Washington State Department of Health

Author: Washington State Department of Health

Date: December 8, 2025

<https://doh.wa.gov/newsroom/department-health-releases-2025-maternal-mortality-review-panel-report>

3. Severe maternal morbidity and Black-white differences in Washington State Source/Publication: Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine / PubMed Author: B. Garg et al.

Date: 2022

<https://ohsu.elsevierpure.com/en/publications/severe-maternal-morbidity-and-black-white-differences-in-washingt/>

4. Washington Statewide Doula Hub and Referral System: Recommendations for Implementation and Sustainability

Source/Publication: Washington State Health Care Authority

Author: Washington State Health Care Authority / Surge Reproductive Justice Date: June 30, 2025

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/doula-hub-referral-leg-report-2025.pdf>

5. Doula benefit provides support and an advocate

Source/Publication: Washington State Health Care Authority, HCA Connections Author:

Washington State Health Care Authority

Date: June 2025

<https://connections.hca.wa.gov/health-equity/2025/june/doula-benefit-provides-support-and-an-advocate>

6. 2025 March of Dimes Report Card for Washington

Source/Publication: March of Dimes PeriStats

Author: March of Dimes

Date: 2025

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/washington/report-card>

7. Racial Disparities in Maternal and Infant Health: Current Status and Key Issues Source/Publication: KFF

Author: KFF

Date: December 3, 2025

<https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/racial-disparities-in-maternal-and-infant-health-current-status-and-key-issues/>

8. Black Infant Health program supports parents and healthier babies Source/Publication: Washington State Health Care Authority, HCA Connections Author: Washington State Health Care Authority

Date: June 2022

<https://connections.hca.wa.gov/health-equity/2022/june/black-infant-health-program-supports-parents-and-healthier-babies>