

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore City Fire Department, Baltimore Police Department, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss maternal health in Baltimore City, including the current state of maternal health and any inequities that currently exist in maternal health delivery and outcomes.

Recitals

In September 2022, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released pregnancy-related fatality data from 36 U.S. states for the years 2017 to 2019. The report found that 84.2% of pregnancy-related deaths, or 4 out of 5, were preventable. The United States is the only developed country in the world to have an increase in maternal mortality since 1990.

Deeply-rooted inequities in overall maternal health and maternal mortality plague pregnant and birthing individuals on a local, State, and national scale. Nationally, Black women are 3 times more likely to die during pregnancy and the postpartum period than their White counterparts. In Maryland, the number of Black women who died from pregnancy-related causes was 2.2 times greater than the number of White women who died from the same causes. Systemic inequities have created barriers to maternal healthcare access for marginalized communities, putting low-income, undocumented, and Black parents at risk.

The leading causes of pregnancy-related death reflect the quality of life struggles created by racial, socioeconomic, and locality-based inequities: the gun violence epidemic, the opioid overdose epidemic, and gaps in the delivery of maternal health services.

Despite the challenges faced by Baltimore City's parents, technological advances, including telehealth, provide hope that trends can be reversed and maternal health can be delivered in a more equitable manner. These advances are already being explored: in March 2023, Google announced a partnership with Northwestern Memorial Hospital to use artificial intelligence to make ultrasounds more accessible to parents, a measure that Google predicts will halve the maternal mortality rate.

It is critical that the City Council analyzes: (1) the local underlying causes of adverse maternal health outcomes; (2) the City's existing infrastructure and investments; (3) successful policies in comparable municipalities; and (4) new technologies that may improve maternal health. The City Council must ensure that Baltimore City residents have equitable access to healthcare services, so they can experience the most optimal maternal health outcomes and so the City no longer loses parents to preventable, pregnancy-related causes.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore City Fire Department, Baltimore Police Department, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss maternal health in Baltimore City, including the current state of maternal health and any inequities that currently exist in maternal health delivery and outcomes.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Commissioner of the Baltimore City Health Department, the Chief of the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department, and the Mayor's legislative liaison to the City Council.