



SPONSOR: Sen. Gay & Rep. Griffith  
Sens. Ennis, Hansen, Hocker, Lawson, Lockman,  
Mantzavinos, S. McBride, Pettyjohn, Pinkney, Poore,  
Richardson, Sokola, Townsend, Wilson; Reps.  
Baumbach, Briggs King, Heffernan, Minor-Brown,  
S. Moore, Morrison, Osienski, Michael Smith, Wilson-  
Anton

DELAWARE STATE SENATE  
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 35

RECOGNIZING MAY 5, 2021 AS MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY.

1 WHEREAS, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (“PMADs”), including post-partum depression, impact women  
2 of every culture, age, income level, and race; and

3 WHEREAS, PMADs are the most common complication of childbirth, impacting between 10% and 20% of  
4 women; and

5 WHEREAS, symptoms of PMADs can include depressed mood or severe mood swings; difficulty or diminished  
6 ability to bond with the baby; diminished ability to think clearly, concentrate, or make decisions; withdrawal from family or  
7 friends; severe anxiety; panic attacks; and thoughts of self-harm; and

8 WHEREAS, PMADs result in maternal suffering and are associated with increased risks of marital conflict and  
9 impaired emotional, social, and cognitive development in the child; and

10 WHEREAS, PMADs can be triggered by complex psychological, social, and biological stressors; and

11 WHEREAS, women of color experience PMADs at twice the rate of Caucasian women, with 38% of new mothers  
12 of color experiencing PMADs; and

13 WHEREAS, 60% of women of color do not receive treatment for PMADs; and

14 WHEREAS, lack of insurance coverage, social and cultural stigma, logistical barriers to services, and lack of  
15 culturally appropriate care significantly contribute to inequitable access to perinatal mood and anxiety disorder treatment;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, lack of access to sick leave or medical leave presents a barrier for low-income and middle-class  
18 employed mothers seeking treatment; and

19 WHEREAS, many women are not aware that PMADs are classified as a disability and protected under the  
20 Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), or fear they will be discriminated against if they seek temporary  
21 accommodations under the ADA while they obtain treatment for PMADs; and

22 WHEREAS, COVID-19 has led to increased symptoms of anxiety and depression among pregnant women, and  
23 medical professionals recommend supporting and expanding preventative programs and interventions to mitigate the  
24 impact of the pandemic on the mental health of pregnant women; and

25 WHEREAS, outcomes for women suffering from PMADs could be improved through expanding Medicaid to  
26 provide postpartum coverage beyond 60 days to a full year and to cover doula services, by funding training and certification  
27 of mental health providers in PMADs, and by ensuring that employees have access to paid parental leave of 12 weeks or  
28 more; and

29 WHEREAS, the development of childcare assistance solutions, allowing mothers to get the treatment they need  
30 without risking the care of their children, will help improve outcomes for mothers and children alike; and

31 WHEREAS, the Center for Women's Emotional Wellness at Christiana Care is recognized as the only  
32 collaborative behavioral health treatment center in Delaware specializing in maternal mental health; and

33 WHEREAS, increasing awareness of PMADs through a public health campaign to make Delawareans aware of  
34 the need for early detection and that treatment is key to promoting early detection and eliminating the societal stigma that  
35 may prevent women from seeking treatment.

36 NOW, THEREFORE:

37 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 151st General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of  
38 Representatives concurring therein, that the General Assembly hereby designates May 5, 2021, as "Maternal Mental Health  
39 Awareness Day" in the State of Delaware.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Delaware should prioritize the health and well-being of mothers by promoting  
41 awareness of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and working to address the social and economic barriers that contribute  
42 to, and exacerbate, these disorders, including addressing the disproportionate racial impact and barriers that prevent women  
43 from seeking and obtaining treatment.

#### SYNOPSIS

This resolution recognizes May 5, 2021, as Maternal Mental Health Awareness Day in Delaware.

Author: Senator Gay