

1       A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION establishing the Infant Mortality Task Force.

2       WHEREAS, the United States has the highest infant mortality and maternal  
3       mortality rates out of any other high-income country and spends the most on health care;  
4       and

5       WHEREAS, in the first year of life, over 20,000 infants died in the United States,  
6       including 342 in Kentucky in 2023; and

7       WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),  
8       the leading causes of infant mortality are birth defects, low birthweight and preterm birth,  
9       maternal pregnancy complications, sudden infant death syndrome, and unintentional  
10      injuries; and

11      WHEREAS, Kentucky's infant mortality rate was 6.6 deaths per 1,000 births in  
12      2023, an increase from 5.8 in 2022 according to data from the CDC; and

13      WHEREAS, the preterm birth rate in Kentucky was 11.3 percent per 1,000 births in  
14      2023, and data from the CDC showed a decline from 11.7 percent in 2022; and

15      WHEREAS, from 2021 to 2023 the infant mortality rate for black infants was 10.3  
16      per 1,000 births compared to 5.5 for white infants and 6.7 for Hispanic infants; and

17      WHEREAS, Kentucky's rate of maternal mortality is 38.4 per 100,000 births in  
18      2023 compared to 18.6 for the United States in 2023; and

19      WHEREAS, Kentucky scores poorly on several measures for maternal  
20      vulnerability, including socioeconomic determinants, reproductive health care, mental  
21      health issues, and substance abuse; and

22      WHEREAS, Kentucky has made several policy improvements in recent years,  
23      including extended Medicaid coverage for new mothers and increased access to prenatal  
24      care; and

25      WHEREAS, possible policy options to continue improvements and address the  
26      racial gap in infant and maternal deaths may include expanding access to birthing centers  
27      and providing Medicaid reimbursement for doulas; and

1        WHEREAS, listening to women's maternity experiences in Kentucky and exploring  
2 best practices in other states may provide additional policy recommendations;

3        NOW, THEREFORE,

4        ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***  
5 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:***

6        ➔Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission shall establish the Infant  
7 Mortality Task Force to review factors influencing infant mortality and make  
8 recommendations to decrease the rate of infant mortality in the Commonwealth.

9        ➔Section 2. The duties of the Infant Mortality Task Force shall include but are  
10 not limited to:

11        (1) Reviewing research that examines the connections between a mother's health  
12 before, during, and between pregnancies, as well as that of her child across the course of  
13 the child's life;

14        (2) Reviewing comprehensive data on infant mortality deaths and pregnancy  
15 complications, including data disaggregated by race, geography, and socioeconomic  
16 status;

17        (3) Reviewing research and listening to women's maternity experiences to  
18 identify best practices and effective interventions for improving the quality and safety of  
19 maternity care and reducing infant mortality; and

20        (4) Making recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission, the  
21 Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and any other relevant executive branch agency,  
22 including but not limited to the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, the Public Protection  
23 Cabinet, the Cabinet for Economic Development, and the Education and Labor Cabinet,  
24 to improve health care and social, economic, and environmental conditions that may  
25 improve maternal health and decrease infant mortality.

26        ➔Section 3. The Infant Mortality Task Force shall be composed of the following  
27 members, with final membership of the task force being subject to the consideration and

1 approval of the Legislative Research Commission:

2 (1) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of  
3 the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated by the Speaker of the  
4 House of Representatives as a co-chair of the task force;

5 (2) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Minority Floor  
6 Leader of the House of Representatives;

7 (3) Three members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, one of  
8 whom shall be designated by the President of the Senate as a co-chair of the task force;  
9 and

10 (4) One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority Floor Leader of the  
11 Senate.

12 ➔Section 4. The Infant Mortality Task Force shall meet monthly during the 2026  
13 Interim of the General Assembly. The task force shall submit findings and  
14 recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission for referral to the appropriate  
15 committee or committees by December 1, 2026.

16 ➔Section 5. Provisions of this Resolution to the contrary notwithstanding, the  
17 Legislative Research Commission shall have the authority to alternatively assign the  
18 issues identified herein to an interim joint committee or subcommittee thereof, and to  
19 designate a study completion date.