

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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Action: Be Adopted  
Vote: 8 - 0 - 1  
Yeas: Boone, Cowan, Dembrow, Freeman, Maurer, Olson, VanOrman, Tomei  
Nays: 0  
Exc.: Huffman  
Prepared By: Keely West, Administrator  
Meeting Dates: 2/25

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Recognizes March as Maternal Mental Health Awareness Month. Encourages Early Childhood Council, health care providers, parents and other stakeholders to increase understanding and awareness of the mental health needs of pregnant and postpartum women and their families.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Need for awareness
- Need for networks
- Treatment for perinatal depression
- Long term effects of perinatal depression on children

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** Mothers with a severe untreated psychiatric disorder lasting two months or more affect their children in a variety of ways. Evidence based studies find that babies of these mothers suffer lower birth weights, smaller head circumferences, higher preterm rates, near twice the normal stillbirth rate, more Cesarean sections and more complications in pregnancy and delivery. After birth, these same children continue to struggle. Babies of mothers affected by depression/anxiety disorders have trouble sleeping, eating, gaining weight and attaching. Additionally, these children experience cognitive and language delays, poorer social, behavioral, and emotional health, greater risk of drug, alcohol or tobacco use and more psychiatric problems as they grow into their teens. Only 11 percent of women affected by perinatal mood disorders receive treatment.

Proponents of HJR 15 assert the resolution would make a positive public declaration that we can and should talk about Maternal Mental Health and offer hope and resources to families in an effort to prevent a crisis.