

Senators Warren, Anderson, Hunter and Johnson offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 47.

A resolution to declare May 2011 as Postpartum Depression Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, Postpartum depression (PPD), which is also known as perinatal mood disorder or PMD, affects nearly 20 percent of families who have infants, and many more cases go unreported or undiagnosed. It affects primarily birth mothers, but it can also afflict fathers, grandparents, and adoptive parents. PPD can develop immediately after the baby is born and up to 18 months after, but it can also appear during pregnancy and the adoption process. Over 2,500 women and their families are affected by PPD each year in the state of Michigan; and

Whereas, PPD/PMD is an umbrella term used to describe a whole category of postpartum mood disorders, including postpartum depression, postpartum panic/anxiety disorder, postpartum OCD, postpartum post-traumatic stress disorder, and postpartum psychosis. The symptoms of PPD/PMD vary from person to person but can include anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, guilt, irritability, anger, rage, difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much, changes in appetite, difficulty concentrating or making simple decisions, extreme worry, panic, hopelessness, feeling disconnected from one's baby, frightening or intrusive thoughts, inability to function in daily life, wanting to run away or escape, irrational thoughts, and thoughts of harm to self or baby; and

Whereas, Education is the best tool to fight PPD/PMD, and raising awareness among new parents, educating the public, and reaching out to health practitioners can increase the rate at which afflicted mothers get help. Some medical professionals erroneously dismiss patients' concerns, telling them that they are just tired, stressed, need a break, or that it is all in their head. A simple screening tool already in use nationwide, the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, can be used by families and professionals to assess a parent with PPD/PMD. In New Jersey, a recent PPD awareness campaign was titled "Speak Up When You're Down." Encouraging women and families to push for the help and support they need will result in a reduced incidence and severity of PPD; and

Whereas, Media reports have publicized the most severe cases, known as postpartum psychosis, and caused many women with PPD to fear coming forward and asking for help, imagining they would be judged or their children taken away. The shame and guilt that goes along with PPD lead many to suffer in silence; and

Whereas, Much is unknown about the causes of PPD/PMD. Contributing factors can include lack of social and emotional support, a difficult pregnancy or delivery, family history of depression or anxiety, biochemical and hormonal imbalance, major life changes (job loss, moving, financial hardship) and, in some cases, the death of a baby. Additionally, many families in Michigan are dealing with multiple stressors in this difficult economic time, and extended families are just not able to help like they once were; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative body declare May 2011 as Postpartum Depression Awareness Month in the state of Michigan. We encourage all citizens to participate in the aims and goals of this effort.