

House Bill 1481

By: Representatives Cannon of the 58th, Bazemore of the 69th, Miller of the 62nd, and Holly of the 116th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 holidays and observances, so as to designate Black Midwives Day in Georgia; to provide for
3 legislative findings; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
4 purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Black midwives fulfill an essential role and contribute to improving maternal health
9 outcomes by addressing disparities and providing congruent care to Black birthing
10 people;

11 (2) The Black Midwives Day campaign was founded in 2023 by the National Black
12 Midwives Alliance to designate March 14 as a day of awareness, education, advocacy,
13 and community engagement to uplift the legacy and ongoing work of Black midwives;

14 (3) Black maternal health in the United States remains in crisis, with Black birthing
15 people experiencing significantly higher rates of maternal morbidity and mortality
16 regardless of income, education, or socioeconomic status;

- 17 (4) Many cities and counties in the United States face a high number of maternity care
18 deserts, where women of childbearing age do not have access to hospitals or birth centers
19 offering maternity care or obstetric providers, which leads to higher rates of maternal
20 morbidity and mortality, as most complications occur in the postpartum period when
21 birthing people are far away from their providers;
- 22 (5) Integrating midwives into the maternity care system has been shown to improve birth
23 outcomes, reduce medical interventions, and decrease the racial disparities in maternal
24 and infant health;
- 25 (6) Midwives can assist birthing people and their families with safe and effective
26 childbirth options, and promulgating midwifery promotes access to safe and effective
27 antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum care;
- 28 (7) Black midwives have historically provided holistic community centered care yet have
29 been systematically excluded from healthcare systems through restrictive policies and
30 regulations;
- 31 (8) The resurgence of Black midwifery is a testament to midwives' resilience and their
32 commitment to reclaiming traditional birthing practices that prioritize respect, autonomy,
33 and positive health outcomes;
- 34 (9) It is important to invest in midwifery to expand access to midwifery education and
35 training and to ensure fair compensation and support for midwives;
- 36 (10) In order to facilitate optimal healthcare access, midwives should have no restrictions
37 to practicing midwifery to the full extent and scope of their training;
- 38 (11) In order to promote the restoration of Black midwives to their communities, all
39 educational and certification pathways should be open, available, and funded to build the
40 workforce of midwives; and
- 41 (12) Observing Black Midwives Day creates an opportunity to support and recognize the
42 long-standing and invaluable contributions of Black midwives to maternal and infant
43 health in the United States.

44

SECTION 2.

45 Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and
46 observances, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

47 "1-4-28.

48 March 14 of each year is designated as 'National Black Midwives Day' in Georgia."

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SECTION 3.

50 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.