

Senate Resolution 108

By: Senators James of the 28th, Mangham of the 55th, Rahman of the 5th and Anderson of the 43rd

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing January 23, 2025, as Doula Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the Bellies to Babies Foundation has a long-standing reputation for its doula
3 training program and effective maternal health support, improving outcomes for mothers and
4 babies in the State of Georgia; and
- 5 WHEREAS, obstacles to support in hospitals are a widespread issue, preventing mothers
6 from having full autonomy and partnership in decision-making during childbirth, and the
7 Bellies to Babies Foundation has trained doulas in the community since 2011, contributing
8 to infrastructure changes within hospital systems that have seen decreases in cesarean section
9 rates within a year of patients utilizing services from the foundation's trained doulas; and
- 10 WHEREAS, the United States has the highest maternal mortality rate among developed
11 countries, with at least half of these deaths being preventable; and
- 12 WHEREAS, peer-reviewed research shows that doulas significantly improve the outcomes
13 of laboring and birthing individuals when they have a supportive role on the birth team; and

14 WHEREAS, doulas in Georgia, including Berthina Marquez, Nar Sanders, Janisa, Imani
15 Gunn, Rara Hill, Wendi Wright, Naima Bond, Rosalee Henry, Destiny Muhammad, Simone,
16 Ziah McKinney, Danielle Lyles Barton, Chi T Mathias, Zakirah Abdul-Hameed, DErica
17 Smith, Tiffany Bryant, Chanel Stryker, and Corrinna Edwards, are making a meaningful
18 difference through their services, agencies, or advocacy; and

19 WHEREAS, organizations and programs such as Birthin' with Berthina, Guiding Lite LLC
20 Holistic Midwifery & Family Health Services, Doula of the Divine, Morehouse School of
21 Medicine, Wellstar, Mothers Helping Hands Atlanta LLC, Chosen Womb, Divine Hands
22 Agency, ATLDoula and Disability Advocacy, Blooming All Over, Your Divine Doula, Lamis
23 Womb Care, Mamas With Her Wings LLC, the Georgia Community Doula Coalition, and
24 the Bellies to Babies Foundation are well-known for servicing Georgia families and
25 improving birth outcomes for all; and

26 WHEREAS, women of color are more likely to experience discriminatory and inappropriate
27 treatment as well as poorer quality of care; and

28 WHEREAS, Black mothers are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related
29 causes than their white counterparts; and

30 WHEREAS, there is a shortage of Black healthcare providers, with data from the Association
31 of American Medical Colleges showing that in 2019, only 2.6 percent of doctors and 7.3
32 percent of medical students identified as Black or African American; and

33 WHEREAS, the Black infant mortality rate is more than twice as high as the rate for white
34 infants; and

35 WHEREAS, studies suggest that the mortality disparity between Black and white infants
36 decreases when Black infants are treated by Black healthcare providers, and that racism,
37 implicit bias, and lack of cultural competency play major roles in infant and maternal
38 morbidity and mortality; and

39 WHEREAS, Black doula and doula of color play an important role in improving birth
40 outcomes for Black families; and

41 WHEREAS, Ziah McKinney, owner of ATLdoula and Disability Advocacy, is a disabled
42 doula who serves the disabled community; more doula specializing in disability services are
43 needed for Georgia's birthing families; and

44 WHEREAS, there is a particular shortage of maternity care in rural areas, where fewer than
45 half of all rural counties have a practicing obstetrician-gynecologist (OB/GYN) or baby
46 delivery services; and

47 WHEREAS, the Bellies to Babies Foundation is one of the oldest training programs for
48 Black-led doula businesses and agency owners, continuing to increase the number of
49 entrepreneurs in birth work, including doula, birth assistants, community health workers,
50 and midwives, with published peer-reviewed research showing that mothers have better
51 experiences when utilizing this level of care and services for their births.

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
53 recognize January 23, 2025, as Doula Day at the state capitol.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
55 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the
56 press.