



WHEREAS, Black women are 2.3 times more likely to die from pregnancy or childbirth-related causes – Black Mamas ATX reports that this relates to the mental health effects of unrecognized bias in communication or care of Black women, in the identification and intervention of postpartum depression, and the context of the social determinants of health; and

WHEREAS, 27% of Black women in Texas have not seen a doctor in the past year; and

WHEREAS, Increases in food insecurity in Austin/Travis County were most significant among Hispanic and Spanish-speaking families, especially due to job loss; and

WHEREAS, As of April 12, 2021, 32% of White Texans have been vaccinated for COVID-19, while only 19% of Black Texans and 21% of Hispanic Texans have been vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, This decline in standard health care coupled with negative trends in social determinants of health, like food insecurity and stress, will lead to poor health outcomes for all families with newborns in Austin/Travis County, especially those in Black and Brown communities; and

WHEREAS, We need to invest in and normalize a universal system of care for the postpartum period; and

WHEREAS, Providing home visits, conducting mental wellness screenings, and facilitating referrals to long-term support from a network of community resources greatly improve the chances of success for all families with newborns; and

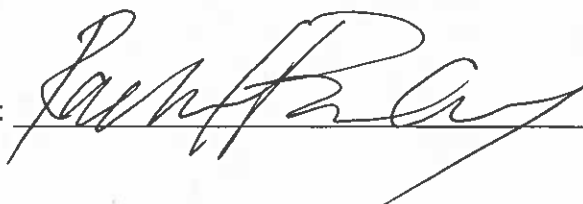
WHEREAS, Family Connects is an evidence-based, short-term, postpartum, nurse home visiting program for families with newborns; research shows that a \$1 investment in the Family Connects program returns \$3 in savings on emergency room costs alone; and an investment from public dollars has the potential to reach population-level results that piece-meal funding from philanthropic sources could never achieve.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Early Childhood Council recommends that the City of Austin expand the reach of the Family Connects program by 2,000 births per year to provide the healthiest possible start for newborns and their families in Austin/Travis County. An investment of \$1.18M a year (\$3.54M for 3 years) would enable the Family Connects program to add an additional 2,000 births a year with an emphasis on serving births covered by Medicaid and families served by our community's Federally Qualified Health Centers.

Date of Approval: May 12, 2021

Record of the vote: 9-0 with two abstaining (Anna Lisa Conlin, Cathy McHorse)

Attest:



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