

PRESS RELEASE

Assemblymember **PEDRO NAVA**



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The State Public Affairs Committee Sponsors Nava Measure *ACR 105 Increases Awareness for Women & Families who Suffer from Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders*

Assemblymember Pedro Nava announced that his Assembly Concurrent Resolution 105, sponsored by the Junior Leagues of California State Public Affairs Committee and supported by The Junior League of Fresno, passed the Assembly and Senate Floors and was Chaptered this week.

“This resolution is vital to raise awareness in California regarding a very real and serious health issue for new mothers and their families,” said Nava. “Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMAD) impact 1 in 8 women. By naming the month of May as Perinatal Depression Awareness Month, I hope to facilitate public discussion, increased awareness and access for women and their families to important healthcare services.”

ACR 105 will proclaim the month of May as Perinatal Depression Awareness Month and request that the State Department of Health Care Services, the State Department of Public Health, the State Department of Mental Health, First 5 California, Postpartum Support International, and other stakeholders work together to explore ways to improve women's access to mental health care at the state and local levels. Additionally, it encourages the stakeholders to facilitate increased awareness and education about perinatal depression and to explore and encourage the use of prenatal screening tools in order to improve the availability of effective treatment and community support services.

Said Los Angeles County Supervisor and Chairwoman, Gloria Molina, “In Los Angeles County, statistics show that perinatal depression and mood disorders affect almost 20 percent of new and expectant mothers. Assemblymember Nava’s measure is a step in the right direction to make sure that women and their families know that there are supportive healthcare services in Los Angeles County available to them.” As unfortunately displayed in our Community of Fresno this week, there is no greater time than now to help these women, children and families.

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders occur during pregnancy as well as during the postpartum period. These disorders can take many forms, including depression, anxiety disorders, and psychosis. The afflictions can have potentially serious repercussions for the emotional, social, and physical health and well-being of mothers, children, and families. National studies indicate that 1 in 8 women suffer from perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and 80% of these women go undiagnosed and untreated.

Said Julie Elginer, Co-Chair of the Junior Leagues of California State Public Affairs Committee and Doctoral Candidate at UCLA School of Public Health, “It is with tremendous pride that the Junior Leagues of California continues our two-year collaboration with Assembly Member Nava, advocating on behalf of women and their families who are affected by perinatal depression mood and anxiety disorders. I, Mia Fletcher, advocate for the State Public Affairs Committee and The Junior League of Fresno have myself been afflicted by this debilitating disorder. “As an educated mother, I was not aware of the anxiety and overwhelming emotions that would

negatively effect myself and my children for 8 years! I wish I had the help needed at the time to receive support, and simply remove the stigma associated with Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders. I believe my life has come full circle, to have suffered, and now lobby on behalf of ACR 105 has been an honor.”

Maternal depression is a widespread public health issue that impacts the well-being and livelihood of mothers, their children, and their families. In California, there are nearly 550,000 new and expectant mothers annually. The month-long designation allows stakeholders including mental and public health departments, healthcare providers, community and faith based organizations, support groups, and other nonprofits a consistent opportunity to coordinate resources, work to increase awareness, and educate their local communities as to the services available to women, infants, children and families.”

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