

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4002

Introduced by

Senators K. Roers, Davison, Oban

Representatives Hanson, Pyle, Schauer

1 A concurrent resolution declaring September 23, 2021, as Fourth Trimester Care Day in North
2 Dakota.

3 **WHEREAS**, the practice of our health care system is to provide focused care during
4 pregnancy and birth, with weekly checkups in the final weeks of gestation, but often a new
5 mother is afforded a single followup visit, generally six weeks after the baby is born; and

6 **WHEREAS**, it is commonly understood a child's healthy development in the child's first few
7 years of life is a crucial factor in creating positive outcomes for the rest of the child's life; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the well-being of a mother and her infant are intimately connected and rather
9 than treating them as separate entities, their care should be understood as mutually beneficial,
10 with the needs of the one considered in the context of the needs of the other; and

11 **WHEREAS**, a mother undergoes a period of substantial transformation and adaptation,
12 particularly through the first three months of motherhood, simultaneously experiencing physical,
13 hormonal, and psychosocial changes as well as shifting roles and responsibilities; and

14 **WHEREAS**, this period of transition should be recognized as the fourth trimester, a time
15 during which mothers are deserving of care in their own right; and

16 **WHEREAS**, mothers may suffer a number of physical health issues during the fourth
17 trimester which far too often go undiagnosed and untreated, including breastfeeding problems,
18 infections, physical exhaustion, sleep loss, depression, stress, anxiety, rage, loneliness,
19 frequent headaches, heavy bleeding, backache, weight control, pelvic and coccyx pain, urinary
20 and fecal incontinence, diastasis recti, pelvic organ prolapse, hemorrhoids, pubic symphysis
21 separation, painful intercourse, and scar tissue pain from either a cesarean, episiotomy, or
22 natural tearing; and

23 **WHEREAS**, physical issues resulting from childbirth also can affect a new mother's mental
24 health and, in turn, the mother's ability to provide care and nurturing for her baby as well as full
25 return to the workforce and community engagement; and

1 **WHEREAS**, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one in
2 eight mothers in the United States reports symptoms of depression after giving birth; and

3 **WHEREAS**, all major medical organizations recommend six months of exclusive
4 breastfeeding, recognizing the practice of breastfeeding is associated with positive health
5 outcomes for both mother and infant; and

6 **WHEREAS**, although 84 percent of infants in North Dakota in 2017 began breastfeeding,
7 only 29 percent of infants were being exclusively breastfed at the recommended six months, a
8 statistic that may result, in part, from social constraints such as unpaid maternity leave, negative
9 attitudes toward nursing in public, and a lack of workplace accommodations for breastfeeding
10 mothers; and

11 **WHEREAS**, nearly 25 percent of employed mothers returned to work within two weeks of
12 giving birth despite evidence supporting tissue healing requires six weeks thus, compounding
13 health issues and making it even more difficult to fulfill all of their roles and responsibilities; and

14 **WHEREAS**, for the sake of the health and well-being of both mother and infant, a mother
15 should receive the mental, physical, social, and economic support she needs to successfully
16 transition through this important fourth trimester period;

17 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE**
18 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:**

19 That the Sixty-seventh Legislative Assembly declares September 23, 2021, as Fourth
20 Trimester Care Day in North Dakota; and

21 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of State forward a copy of this resolution
22 to the Governor and each member of the North Dakota Congressional delegation.