



2017 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 84

November 6, 2017 - Introduced by Representatives RODRIGUEZ, BALLWEG, CROWLEY, MILROY, SARGENT, SINICKI and SPREITZER, cosponsored by Senators L. TAYLOR and DARLING. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1 **Relating to:** recognizing November 2017 as Prematurity Awareness Month.

2 Whereas, the March of Dimes Foundation is a pioneer in improving the health
3 of infants and women of childbearing age by preventing birth defects, premature
4 birth, and infant mortality; and

5 Whereas, the March of Dimes was founded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt
6 in 1938 to fight polio, and funded the development of two vaccines — still in use today
7 — that virtually eliminated the crippling disease; and

8 Whereas, the March of Dimes in 1958, having achieved its initial mission,
9 shifted its attention from polio to the prevention of birth defects, and through federal
10 and state advocacy led the way in establishing a nationwide network of birth defects
11 monitoring programs and research centers; and

12 Whereas, the March of Dimes has undertaken decades of groundbreaking
13 research in maternal and child health, which has led to the discovery of lifesaving
14 products and tests such as surfactant therapy for premature infants and tests to
15 identify life-threatening birth defects; and

1 Whereas, the March of Dimes was a pioneer in the support of newborn
2 screening, urging Congress to pass and fund the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act,
3 which in 2008 established national guidelines on the conditions states should
4 include in newborn programs, and through state advocacy ensured that every state
5 screens all newborns for that core set of conditions; and

6 Whereas, the March of Dimes actively advocated for the reauthorization of
7 federal funds for the Children's Health Insurance Program which covered 167,292
8 children in our state in 2014, ensuring vital access to pediatric healthcare services;
9 and

10 Whereas, the March of Dimes is a long-time advocate for access to health care
11 for women of childbearing age, infants, children, and families, ensuring they have
12 access to private and public health coverage under private coverage, the State
13 Children's Health Insurance Program, Medicaid, Title V Block Grant, and the
14 Affordable Care Act; and

15 Whereas, the March of Dimes in 2003 launched the Prematurity Campaign to
16 address the crisis of premature birth and help families have full-term, healthy
17 babies, and authored the Premature Research Expansion and Education Act for
18 Mothers (PREEMIE) Act, which Congress enacted in 2006, to expand research,
19 education, and services to fight premature births; and

20 Whereas, 6,124 babies are born preterm based on obstetrical estimates in the
21 state of Wisconsin, representing 9.2 percent of all state births; and

22 Whereas, the March of Dimes has set a national goal of reducing preterm births
23 to 5.5 percent in every state by 2030, which will result in a healthier start in life for
24 tens of thousands of infants; and

1 Whereas, the March of Dimes Wisconsin Chapter has worked extensively to
2 promote newborn screening in the state of Wisconsin; and

3 Whereas, the March of Dimes Wisconsin Chapter looks forward to partnering
4 with the Wisconsin State Legislature in response to the continued crisis of premature
5 birth; and

6 Whereas, the month of November is recognized as World Prematurity
7 Awareness Month to bring about recognition of this global health crisis, and
8 November 17 is recognized as Prematurity Awareness Day across the United States;
9 and

10 Whereas, the March of Dimes sponsors numerous programs to support healthy
11 pregnancies and infants, such as its work to prevent early elective deliveries and the
12 NICU Family Support program; and

13 Whereas, the March of Dimes and its volunteers continue to advocate for
14 national and state health policies and programs that affect women of childbearing
15 age, infants, children, and families; now, therefore, be it

16 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the legislature
17 hereby proclaims November 2017 as Prematurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin.

18

(END)