

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 10

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Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2018
Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Decreasing Surgical Births**

3 FOR the purpose of recognizing certain benefits conferred on women who give birth and
4 their babies by lowering the rate of surgical births; encouraging providers of
5 maternity care to support and promote nonoperative vaginal births by providing to
6 individuals certain resources and information; urging certain State agencies to share
7 certain information with parents for a certain purpose and encourage and support
8 certain choices with certain practices; and generally relating to the health of women
9 and children and decreasing surgical births.

10 WHEREAS, A cesarean section is a surgical procedure that has saved the lives of
11 many babies and many women giving birth; and

12 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization found that increasing the rates of
13 cesarean sections beyond 10% of all births is not associated with reductions in maternal
14 and newborn mortality rates in the United States; and

15 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health
16 Resources and Services Administration, through the Healthy People 2010 project, and the
17 American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology have established a goal of achieving a
18 cesarean rate of 15.5% for first–time births; and

19 WHEREAS, The rate of cesarean births in Maryland is sixth highest in the nation,
20 standing at 34.9% of all births in the State as of 2015, according to the most recent data
21 available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

22 WHEREAS, According to the American Pregnancy Association, these statistics
23 represent an increased potential that women and their babies will experience health
24 problems during labor and after birth; and

25 WHEREAS, Complications for women who give birth by a cesarean section can
26 include maternal infections, injury to organs, hemorrhaging or increased blood loss,



1 additional surgeries, including additional cesarean sections, increased separation time
2 from infants after birth, lower breastfeeding rates, a longer and more difficult recovery from
3 birth, an increased risk for future pregnancies, and increased mortality; and

4 WHEREAS, Complications for babies born by a cesarean section can include
5 premature birth, breathing problems, lower breastfeeding rates, and lower Appearance,
6 Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respiration (APGAR) scores; and

7 WHEREAS, Certain routine care practices that are performed during pregnancy and
8 labor have been shown to increase the rates of surgical birth, including inducing or
9 augmenting labor without a medical indication, continuous electronic fetal monitoring,
10 arbitrary time limits on labor, routine intravenous fluids in lieu of nourishment or oral
11 hydration, and restricting movement during labor and birth; and

12 WHEREAS, Certain care procedures and settings can reduce rates of surgical birth
13 but are not easily accessible for most Marylanders, including water immersion, continuous
14 labor support from a doula, upright birthing positions, freestanding birth centers, and
15 access to vaginal birth after cesarean section; and

16 WHEREAS, The largest payer of birthing costs in the State is the State of Maryland
17 through Medicaid; and

18 WHEREAS, A surgical birth costs the State approximately double the amount of a
19 vaginal birth; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General
21 Assembly:

22 (1) recognizes the benefits that lowering the rate of surgical births confers
23 on women who give birth and their babies and affirms that the State should work to ensure
24 that barriers to nonoperative vaginal births are removed;

25 (2) encourages providers of maternity care to support and promote
26 nonoperative vaginal births by providing to individuals resources and information that are
27 shown by evidence to reduce the rates of surgical birth; and

28 (3) urges all State agencies that administer programs that provide
29 maternal or child health services to share with parents information about how to reduce
30 the likelihood of a medically unnecessary surgical birth and to encourage and support
31 parents' birthing choices with evidence-based practices; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
33 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the
34 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable
35 Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Honorable Robert R. Neall,
36 Secretary of Health.