

PROCLAMATION

This month, we pay homage to the rich history and contributions of African-Americans who have shaped our state and nation in innumerable ways. First proposed by scholar Carter G. Woodson in 1926, Black History Month rightfully centers the struggles and triumphs of African-Americans to tell a fuller story of America and the diverse communities that built it.

This year's theme, Black Health and Wellness, lifts up the contributions of African-Americans to medicine while shining a light on persistent health disparities impacting the community. California is committed to closing these equity gaps by making health care, including mental health services, more accessible than ever before and expanding support for the most vulnerable among us.

With the maternal and infant mortality rate among African-Americans significantly higher than the state average, I was honored to sign the landmark Omnibus Act last year to advance our efforts in tackling the socio-economic factors and structural racism at the heart of these preventable tragedies. Building on the state's Black Infant Health Program, Perinatal Equity Initiative and other targeted supports, we've added Medi-Cal coverage for doulas, extended Medi-Cal eligibility for postpartum individuals, provided easier access to CalWORKs for pregnant people, and required perinatal health care providers to undergo implicit bias training.

Throughout the pandemic, California has taken action to address the disproportionate toll on communities of color. Through robust partnerships with faith leaders, community-based organizations and ethnic media, the state has kept equity at the center of our COVID vaccination and testing outreach, meeting Californians where they are with culturally-competent engagement and information. As our recovery continues, we're not letting up on this focus to tackle the wide-ranging disparities laid bare by the pandemic to ensure that all Californians have an opportunity to reach their dreams.

As we honor the accomplishments and history of African-Americans this month, we reflect on the injustices of the past that shape our present. Together, we'll continue to make strides toward a California for All that supports the health and well-being of all our communities and where all families can thrive.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim February 2022, as "Black History Month."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 3rd day of February 2022.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State