

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



PROCLAMATION

California has made strides in reducing the infant mortality rate, but it still saddens me to hear that African-American babies die at a higher rate than babies of other racial/ethnic groups. This is not acceptable. When compared with white infants, African-Americans experience higher infant mortality rates, higher numbers of preterm deliveries and lower birth weights. Additionally, African-American women face a higher risk of dying from complications related to pregnancy.

These heartbreaking facts remind us that there is still hard work to be done to ensure the health of all mothers and newborns. California is working with federal and local agencies to increase access to prenatal and newborn care providers. Since 1989, the state Black Infant Health (BIH) program has delivered comprehensive, prevention-oriented services that meet crucial needs for mothers and infants. Now part of the Department of Public Health, the BIH program remains devoted to reducing infant mortality and the terrible emotional pain it inflicts on California families.

During Black Infant Health Week, we renew our commitment to improving the health of African-American babies and their mothers, and I encourage all Californians to join me in meeting this goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim February 17-23, 2008, as "Black Infant Health Week."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 13th day of February 2008.

Handwritten signature of Arnold Schwarzenegger in black ink.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor of California

ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Debra Bowen in black ink.

DEBRA BOWEN
Secretary of State

