



Legislation Text

File #: 2017-0391, **Version:** 2

A MOTION requesting the executive to establish a two-year pilot project to distribute education materials to establish safe sleeping environments for infants to combat infant mortality due to unsafe sleep practices and sudden infant death syndrome.

WHEREAS, sudden unexpected infant deaths occur suddenly and unexpectedly in previously healthy infants, has no obvious cause of death before investigation and most occur while the infant is sleeping in an unsafe sleep environment, and

WHEREAS, sudden infant death syndrome ("SIDS"), which is a subgroup of sudden unexpected infant death, is defined as the death of an infant less than one year of age that cannot be explained after a thorough investigation is conducted, including a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene and a review of the clinical history, is a major cause of infant deaths in King County, and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a safe sleep environment that can reduce sleep-related infant death risk, and

WHEREAS, the academy's updated 2016 recommendations for a safe sleep environment include supine positioning, the use of a firm sleep surface, the avoidance of soft bedding and overheating and the avoidance of bed-sharing, and

WHEREAS, the academy additionally recommends the avoidance of exposure to smoke, alcohol and illicit drugs, and

WHEREAS, the academy recommends breastfeeding and the use of a pacifier for SIDS reduction, and

WHEREAS, according to the 2012-2015 King County Child Death Review Report, July 2012 and

December 2015, there were forty-two sleep-related infant deaths in King County, sudden unexpected infant death and SIDS, during the period covered by the report, which is thirty-four percent of all the cases of all deaths reviewed in all age groups, ages zero through seventeen, and

WHEREAS, SIDS is not predictable or preventable but child care providers and parents can help reduce the risk of SIDS by using best practices in an environment safe for a baby, and

WHEREAS, the "Safe to Sleep" national campaign, formerly known as the "Back to Sleep" campaign, initiated in 1994 by a collaboration between the National Institute of Child Health and Development, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration and SIDS group increased the percent of infants being properly placed on their backs to sleep from seventeen percent to seventy-three percent between 1993 and 2010, and

WHEREAS, the infant death rate between 1993 and 2010 decreased from 4,700 to 2,063, which is approximately fifty-six percent, as a result of the Back to Sleep campaign, and

WHEREAS, Washington state's Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds (OFCO) - Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities in Washington State August 25, 2017, report provides forty-one recommendations, which include providing Division of Child and Family Services caseworkers with additional training and support resources addressing substance abuse by parents, and assessing child safety and developing plans to ensure the safety of children in the home, and

WHEREAS, infant mortality deaths are used by the National Institute of Health and the Centers for Disease Control as a barometer that provides information on the general health of a society;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The executive is requested to establish a two-year pilot project to distribute education materials to parents when birth records are requested for infants less than one year old on establishing safe sleep environments for infants.

B. The executive is requested to attain the education materials at no cost from the federal government,

the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Washington state Department of Health or local nonprofit organizations, or the county could create new education materials.

C. The executive is requested to ensure that the education material be in compliance with the 2016 updated American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations and be evidence-based.

D. The executive is requested to begin the pilot program within ninety days of the passage of this motion.

E. County staff responsible for distributing education materials are not required to provide customer service support on the education materials other than to provide the education materials.

F. The Public Health - Seattle & King County medical examiner's office is requested to report already-available data on infant deaths due to unsafe sleep practices and SIDS mortality rates at the end of the two-year pilot project.