

Lopez, Maria [COB]

From: CEO <dlee@kalayasdestiny.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 11:24 AM
To: COB_Response
Subject: The Impact of Declining Black Infant Health Funding on Maternal Health Equity in Orange County

Attention: This email originated from outside the County of Orange. Use caution when opening attachments or links.

Good morning, Chair and Supervisors.

My name is Destini Lee, Founder and CEO of Kalaya's Destiny, a nonprofit organization focused on maternal health equity and supporting mothers and families throughout Orange County.

I want to bring attention to the impact that the decision not to accept state funding for Black Infant Health may have on communities already experiencing significant maternal health disparities. Black women continue to face disproportionately higher rates of maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, and adverse birth outcomes compared to many other populations.

Programs such as Black Infant Health were designed to address these disparities through education, support, advocacy, and community connection during pregnancy and postpartum. Access to these services can be particularly important for families navigating barriers to care.

It is also important to acknowledge that historical and intergenerational experiences with healthcare systems and public institutions have contributed to mistrust among some members of the Black community. Trust often plays a critical role in whether individuals access and remain engaged in services. Community based organizations that have longstanding relationships within the communities they serve may be uniquely positioned to provide culturally responsive support and foster meaningful engagement.

As Orange County continues its efforts to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, I hope these realities remain part of the conversation. Black mothers and babies deserve access to services that are effective, culturally responsive, and designed to meet their unique needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

