



Dena Murphy
Director

January 26, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February is Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness Month in Kern County

(Bakersfield, CA) – On **Tuesday, January 30th**, the Kern County **Board of Supervisors** will proclaim the month of February as “Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness Month” during their 9:00 AM meeting. The Safely Surrendered Baby Coalition is planning a series of events throughout Kern County to bring attention to this important law.

63 babies have been safely surrendered in Kern County since we began tracking those babies in 2006, including 6 in 2017.

For most people, the birth of a child is a happy occasion celebrated with family and friends. But for some women, childbirth becomes a crisis - and the decisions made following an infant's birth can be a matter of life or death for the child. The Safely Surrendered Baby Law responds to the situation of newborn infant deaths due to abandonment in unsafe locations. First signed into law in January 2001, the Safely Surrendered Baby Law became permanent in January 2006. The law's intent is to save the lives of newborn infants at risk of abandonment by encouraging parents or persons with lawful custody to safely surrender the infant within 72 hours of birth, with no questions asked. The law exists so that these infants will not be harmed because the mother abandons them, or fails to provide them with care, sometimes leaving them to die.

Join us in celebrating the men and women who make this law possible as we hold a press conference at **Delano Regional Medical Center, 1401 Garces Highway, Delano, on Wednesday, February 7th at 11:00 a.m.** One of the four infants safely surrendered in 2017 was at Delano Regional Medical Center.

Additionally, SSB Coalition members will be making presentations and receiving proclamations in several cities throughout Kern County during the month of February.

Delano City Council will proclaim Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness month at their City Council meeting on **Monday, February 5th**.

Shafter City Council will proclaim Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness month at their City Council meeting on **Tuesday, February 6th**.

Bakersfield City Council will proclaim Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness month at their City Council meeting on **Wednesday, February 7th**.

Wasco City Council will proclaim Safely Surrendered Baby Awareness month at their City Council meeting on **Tuesday, February 6th**.

-more-

Tel 661.631.6000 Fax 661.631.6631 TTY 800.735.2929
100 E. California Avenue P.O. Box 511 Bakersfield, CA 93302 www.KCDHS.org

Kern County Department of Human Services is an equal opportunity employer.

-cont-

Additional presentations will be made at community collaborative meetings throughout Kern County. A complete list of presentation times and locations can be found at www.kcdhs.org.

The Safely Surrendered Baby Coalition leads the effort of educating Kern County residents about this law. This group, led by the Kern County Department of Human Services, is comprised of dedicated individuals representing First 5 Kern, Kern County and Bakersfield City Fire Departments, local and regional hospitals, Kern County Public Health, Clinica Sierra Vista, and Bakersfield Pregnancy Center.

We hope that you can assist us again this year in our efforts to educate our community about this important option for any woman and her baby in a crisis.

Don't abandon your baby. Safely surrender your baby into the hands of any fire station or emergency room personnel. It's safe, legal, and no one has to know.

For media arrangements, please contact Heidi Carter-Escudero at (661) 633-7104 or by cell at (661) 203-2653.

###

