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BILL NO.: SB 110

TITLE: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Doulas

SPONSOR: Senator Ellis

COMMITTEE: Finance

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: January 30, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 110 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Doulas. This bill requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide certified doula services including childbirth, education, support services, and emotional and physical support during pregnancy, labor, birth, and postpartum.

Currently, low-income mothers rank the highest in infant mortality rates when compared to middle and high-income mothers. Without the ability to afford essential childcare services, low-income women are placed at the mercy of their own health and environment. Baltimore County strongly believes that no one's economic status should determine whether their child lives or dies.

SB 110 would relieve fiscal and health-related burdens on low-income women by allocating State funding for doula services. Doulas offer a wide range of important services such as educating mothers on self-care and care for the baby, as well as emotional and physical support for women who are expecting. Certified doulas provide a level of emotional and physical support for pregnant women that is not currently available without extra and at times significant costs. This funding levels the playing field in situations when prenatal and postpartum services can mean the difference between life and death.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 110. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.