



To: The Honorable Chair, Senator Delores G. Kelley and members of the Finance Committee

From: Melissa S. Rock, Birth to Three Strategic Initiative Director

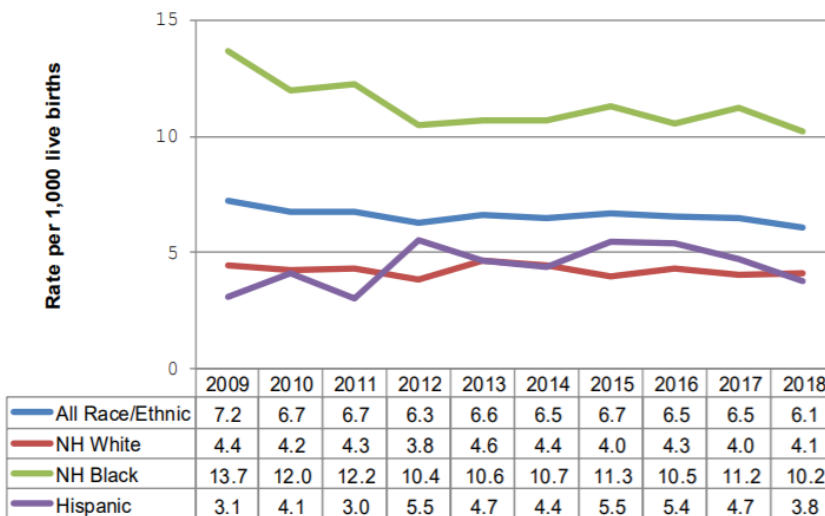
Re.: **AB 944: Hospitals—Care of Infants After Discharge**

Date: March 5, 2020

Position: **SUPPORT**

Over 22,000 infants died in the United States in 2017.<sup>i</sup> The infant mortality rate in the United States is 5.8 per 1,000 births. In Maryland, our infant mortality rate is even higher at 6.1 per 1,000 births.<sup>ii</sup> Maryland's infant mortality rate is among the **highest in the country**. Unfortunately, much like other negative birth outcomes, there are significant racial disparities in infant mortality for Black babies, as seen in the graph from the Maryland Department of Health's Vital Statistics annual report on Infant Mortality.<sup>iii</sup>

**Figure A. Infant Mortality Rates by Race/ethnicity, Maryland, 2009-2018.**



As a member of the State Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (SCCAN), ACY was part of the Maryland Child Abuse and Neglect Fatality Review team that reviewed the 109 non-natural deaths of children under age 5 from 2015 across all of Maryland. **Of those 109 cases, 71 cases, or 65% were sleep related deaths.** All of these deaths were

preventable. **We urge this committee to issue a favorable report on SB 944 to ensure that before leaving the hospital, parents receive education about safe sleep practices, which will help ensure these preventable deaths don't continue to occur.**

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/infantmortality.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/infant\\_mortality\\_rates/infant\\_mortality.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/infant_mortality_rates/infant_mortality.htm)

<sup>iii</sup> [https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Infant\\_Mortality\\_Report\\_2018.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Infant_Mortality_Report_2018.pdf)