



TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Robbyn Lewis

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 2, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 989 – *Hospitals – Care of Infants After Discharge*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 989.

The leading cause of death for infants 1 month to 1 year is Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUIDs). This includes sleep related deaths and SIDS. In an effort to reduce the risk of all sleep-related infant deaths, the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) recently updated policy statement and technical report includes new evidence that supports skin-to-skin care for newborn infants; addresses the use of bedside and in-bed sleepers; and adds to recommendations on how to create a safe sleep environment. The AAP is committed to helping guide conversations about safe sleep with families, with the objective of making safe infant sleep the norm.

House Bill 989 requires hospitals to provide education and information to families regarding “safe sleep practices” and the importance of providing a “safe sleep” environment for infants prior to discharge. The requirements of House Bill 989 do not replace the need for continued education and outreach on safe sleep practices after discharge throughout the first year of life. However, starting that conversation prior to discharge, including providing information on resources available after discharge, will enhance the likelihood that the parents/guardians and other family members will adopt safe sleep practices from day 1 after discharge. Early adoption of safe sleep practices will significantly decrease the likelihood of preventable infant deaths from unsafe sleep practices.

MDAAP believes that passage of House Bill 989 will enhance the positive impact of other safe sleep programs that are committed to advancing this important objective. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Richard A. Tabuteau
410-244-7000