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BILL NO.: **SB 255**

TITLE: **Correctional Services – Pregnant Incarcerated Individuals –
Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment**

SPONSOR: **Senator West**

COMMITTEE: **Judicial Proceedings**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: **February 6, 2020**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 255 – Correctional Services – Pregnant Incarcerated Individuals – Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment. This proposed legislation aims to assist the particularly vulnerable population of incarcerated pregnant individuals with opioid use disorders by providing medical treatment and support services.

Maryland’s correctional facilities are often dangerous places to be pregnant, particularly if the pregnant individual is struggling with addiction. Even if an individual in this situation wishes to address their addiction, their circumstances often limit their ability to do so.

This bill takes a multipronged approach to helping these individuals by facilitating access to FDA-approved medications for opioid use disorder, connecting individuals to reproductive healthcare providers, and providing referrals to counseling and peer recovery specialists. SB 255 would also relieve the administrative burden on corrections officers, who would no longer need to fill the vacuum created by a lack of adequate reproductive healthcare or addiction counselling. The result would be an improved environment for both inmates and correctional employees.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 255. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.