



2024 SESSION
POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 1059

COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

POSITION: Support

TITLE: Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting
(Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024)

BILL ANALYSIS

SB 1059 establishes requirements on local health departments and obstetrics service health care providers and facilities regarding maternal health, including requirements regarding prenatal risk assessment forms and postpartum infant and maternal referral forms. The bill prohibits the Maryland Department of Health (Department) from providing Medical Assistance Program reimbursement to a hospital or freestanding birthing center unless the facility complies with a completing a prenatal risk assessment form. Additionally, the bill requires the Secretary of Health, in collaboration with the Maryland Health Care Commission, to develop a Maryland Report Card for Birthing Facility Maternity Care. The bill also requires the Department to conduct a study of incidents of severe maternal morbidity in the State.

POSITION AND RATIONALE

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) supports *SB 1059*.

Under *SB 1059* the Health Secretary, in collaboration with the MHCC, must develop a Maryland report card for birthing facility maternity care (hospitals or freestanding birthing centers) and collect the necessary information to complete an annual report card for each birthing facility in the state. The report card must include the following information for each birthing facility:

- (1) the number of vaginal deliveries performed;
- (2) the number of cesarean deliveries performed;
- (3) the rate of complications and the total number of complications experienced by a patient receiving obstetric care for:
 - (i) a vaginal delivery at the birthing facility, including maternal hemorrhage, laceration, infection, or any other complication as required by the Secretary; or

- (ii) a cesarean delivery at the birthing facility, including maternal hemorrhage, infection, operative complication, or any other complication as required by the Secretary; and
- (4) qualitative measures based on patient input regarding the patient’s receipt of respectful obstetric care. Lastly, the report card score shall be balanced for the risks associated with the level of acuity care provided for obstetric patients served by the birthing facility.

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) is mandated to establish and maintain a provider performance evaluation system that facilitates quality improvement and enables consumers to make informed health care decisions. To that end, the MHCC maintains the Maryland Quality Reporting website, a comprehensive resource for consumers to evaluate and compare the performance of hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, hospice and several other provider types.

The hospital component of the Quality Reporting website displays information on services provided by all Maryland acute general hospitals including maternity services. Users of the site can identify hospitals that provide birthing services and assess their performance on a limited number of patient safety and quality metrics. Expansion of our maternity data collection and reporting system is a priority for 2024 and 2025 and *SB 1059* aligns well with MHCC's plans for expansion of the website.

In summary, the Commission supports *SB 1059* and believes our Quality Reporting website can serve as the platform for presenting meaningful quality and performance data on the facilities that provide critical maternity services to women across the state. We believe the Report Card can be developed with the Commission’s existing resources and incorporated in our quality measurement and reporting functions in 2024 and 2025 (i.e., phase 1). After the development of the electronic prenatal and postpartum data collection tools, we would like to work with the MDH to determine if the resulting database can be used to develop additional facility performance information (i.e., phase 2).

For the stated reasons above, we ask for a favorable report on *SB 1059*.

