



Maryland
Hospital Association

Senate Bill 59 - Safe Sleep for Infants - Awareness and Certification

Position: *Support with Amendments*

February 8, 2024

Senate Finance Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 59. Maryland's 32 birthing hospitals deliver more than 67,000 babies each year and are committed to a safe delivery, hospital stay, and discharge home.

Maryland's hospitals support the goals of SB 59 and acknowledge the life-saving role that safe sleep practices have in preventing infant mortality. Creating a state-sponsored public awareness campaign could ensure the same messaging on safe sleep is shared across the health care continuum before, throughout, and after pregnancy.

Although the Kids for Cribs designation is a model program, we are concerned about mandating hospitals apply for a specific designation, especially from an organization that is not associated with a state or federal entity. Many Maryland hospitals have applied for the designation and/or are interested; however, we do not support mandating this designation.

MHA worked closely with Delegate Lewis and stakeholders to amend HB 177 this session, which also addresses safe sleep practices. These amendments ensure safe sleep education is provided before an infant is discharged from the hospital while allowing flexibility to choose the method for delivering the information to maximize patient understanding without overwhelming the new parent(s)/guardian(s), and confirming receipt. Adding a public awareness campaign could spread the same message across health care settings and improve receptivity.

We would like to propose the following amendments to SB 59. We appreciate the sponsor's work to raise awareness about this critical public health issue.

Strike section 19-310.4.

19-310.4. (A) A HOSPITAL SHALL BE CERTIFIED BY THE CRIBS FOR KIDS' NATIONAL SAFE SLEEP HOSPITAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AT LEAST AT THE BRONZE LEVEL.

(B) A HOSPITAL CERTIFIED BY THE CRIBS FOR KIDS' NATIONAL SAFE SLEEP HOSPITAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM SHALL SUBMIT PROOF OF THE CERTIFICATION TO THE SECRETARY.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on SB 59 with the proposed amendments.

For more information, please contact:
Jane Krienke, Senior Legislative Analyst, Government Affairs
Jkrienke@mhaonline.org