



**Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)**

To the Senate Finance Committee

Chair: Senator Pamela Beidle

March 13, 2024

***Senate Bill 1059: Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting (Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024)***

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

*Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 1059: Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting (Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024).*

*Despite the extensive clinical knowledge and research that modern medicine has provided our healthcare system, a striking number of women continue to die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. In Maryland, the maternal mortality rate in 2022 was 21.2 deaths per 100,000 births, which is only slightly less than the national rate of 23.5 deaths per 100,000 births (March of Dimes, 2023). According to a publication issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on data from the Maternal Mortality Review Committee, over 80% of all maternal deaths were deemed preventable (Trost, et al., 2019). With the awareness of the preventability surrounding untimely maternal deaths combined with modern medicine leaves little room for justification as to why women continue to die every day due to pregnancy and childbirth complications. In efforts to effectively reduce the current maternal mortality rate, professionals need to analyze past cases in order to identify risks, disparities, and any other weaknesses current practice has on keeping mothers safe. By utilizing this form of surveillance, professionals can then apply gained insight to living women who may present with similar risks as those who have died in the past. With the enactment of SB1059, the State of Maryland will be able to continue data collection on the health of perinatal patients and will be able to alter current practice to best serve the needs of this vulnerable population. From a financial standpoint, with the compliance of the Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024, professionals will be able to identify said risk factors and use that as a basis to create specialized treatment to prevent complications and death from occurring, which cuts down on unnecessary health costs. By investing in the preventative measures explained in the Act, it would not only save money on preventable health care costs, but also save lives of both women and children.*

*On behalf of the Maryland Rural Health Association,  
Jonathan Dayton, MS, NREMT, CNE, Executive Director*

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March of Dimes. (2023). 2023 march of dimes report card for Maryland. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/maryland/report-card>

Trost, S., Beauregard, J., Chandra, G., Njie, F., Berry, J., Harvey, A., & Goodman, D. A. (2019). Pregnancy-related deaths: Data from maternal mortality review committees in 36 US states, 2017–2019. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/docs/pdf/Pregnancy-Related-Deaths-Data-MMRCs-2017-2019-H.pdf>