

Amy Redondo
107 Greenbrier Road
Towson, Maryland 21286
amy@creativepaintfinishes.net

Re: Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024 (HB1051/SB1059)

March 4, 2024

Dear Members of the Maryland House of Delegates and State Senate, the Health and Government Operations Committee:

I urge you to vote in favor of the Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024 (HB1051/SB1059). As a mother of two and resident of the state of Maryland, I can only say that we are not doing enough. One in four women die by suicide due to the devastating and preventable effects of postpartum depression. That number has tripled over the past decade.

When my first daughter was born, I was suffering with debilitating postpartum depression. Despite all of the follow up doctor's appointments for both my baby and myself, my anguish went undiagnosed. My OBGYN and pediatrician, both who I hold in very high regard, were focused primarily on physical health. Fortunately, I had family and friends who were able to recognize my despair and advocate for me, when I was unable to do so for myself. Many women are not as lucky.

The passage of this bill is critical. New mothers are in desperate need of mental health support and resources. Universal screenings and referrals should be considered a basic element of follow up care for all who give birth. Increased access to this type of healthcare would offer lifesaving opportunities to identify and intervene for women at risk.

Sincerely,

Amy Redondo