

**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

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

**Hearing Date:** March 27, 2024

**Position:** Support

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The Women's Law Center of Maryland (WLC) supports *Senate Bill 1059 – Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting (Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024)* with amendments. The legislation provides for a public health approach in addressing high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality in Maryland.

Severe maternal morbidity in Maryland has risen from 69.8 to 88.2 cases per 10,000 deliveries between 2010 and 2022 in Maryland.<sup>i</sup> The Women's Law Center of Maryland is concerned about the impact on all communities, including Black and brown communities which have higher rates of maternal morbidity and mortality. When compared to Non-Hispanic White women in Maryland, non-Hispanic Black women face a 65% higher risk of severe maternal morbidity.<sup>ii</sup>

At some point during the legislative process, there was discussion of a workgroup. If this occurs, we would ask that the Woman's Law Center of Maryland and the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence be included.

Thanks so much for the work of the sponsor and Committee on this important bill. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

**The Women’s Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://mdmom.org/maternal-morbidity-surveillance>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10467219/>