



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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House Bill 1051 - Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting (Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024)
Health and Government Operations Committee - March 6, 2024
SUPPORT

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2024 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of [HB1051 Maternal Health – Assessments, Referrals, and Reporting \(Maryland Maternal Health Act of 2024\)](#). This bill establishes a standard of care for high-risk pregnancies by requiring obstetric hospitals and birthing centers to complete prenatal and postpartum risk assessment forms, and report on the number and type of referrals, resources and information provided. For high-risk pregnancies, birthing facilities must also call the birthing parent within twelve hours of discharge to evaluate the parent's status. The Maryland State Department of Health may not provide Medical Assistance Program reimbursement to a facility unless the facility complies with these requirements. This bill also requires the Department to develop a Maryland Report Card for Birthing Facility Maternity Care, include this report card on the Department's website, and annually review the criteria evaluated in the report card.

Maryland ranks 22nd in the nation in maternal mortality. [Maryland's maternal mortality rate \(MMR\)](#), although declining, remains above the healthy target of 11.4 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births with an MMR of 18.4 deaths. Furthermore, there are significant [racial disparities](#). Black non-Hispanic women have an MMR that is 2.5 times greater than White non-Hispanic women, and this disparity is growing. Maryland ranks 34th in [infant mortality](#). Black infant mortality rates are nearly double that of White non-Hispanic infants.

We ask for your support for HB1051 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report. Passage of this legislation will incentivize hospitals and other birthing facilities to improve maternal care and provide the Department of Health with data to address racial disparities.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

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WDC Working Families Committee

Cynthia Rubenstein
Co-Chair, WDC Advocacy