



Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

Bill: House Bill 161 - Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established

Hearing Date: January 29, 2025

Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *House Bill 161 - Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established*. The bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in consultation with the Maryland Department of Health, to develop a comprehensive health education framework. The framework should include health promotion, mental and emotional health, substance abuse prevention, family life and human sexuality, gender identity and sexual orientation, safety and violence prevention, safe and appropriate social media and internet use, healthy eating, and disease prevention and control. A parent or guardian can opt out of the family life and human sexuality topic.

Providing comprehensive and age-appropriate health education is critical to enhancing the health and well-being of children and adolescents. There is strong evidence that comprehensive health education reduces the risk of pregnancy, transmission of sexual transmitted infections including HIV, and sexually abusive relationships.ⁱ

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ Chin HB et al. Community Preventive Services Task Force. The effectiveness of group-based comprehensive risk-reduction and abstinence education interventions to prevent or reduce the risk of adolescent pregnancy, human immunodeficiency virus, and sexually transmitted infections: two systematic reviews for the Guide to Community Preventive Services. *Am J Prev Med.* 2012 Mar;42(3):272-94. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2011.11.006. PMID: 22341164.