

February 9, 2026

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña Melnyk

Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee

241 House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 372, Hospitals, Emergency Pregnancy Related Medical Conditions

Dear Chair Peña Melnyk,

Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU) respectfully submits this letter in strong support of House Bill 372, Hospitals, Emergency Pregnancy Related Medical Conditions, which is under consideration by the House Health and Government Operations Committee. This bill strengthens requirements for hospitals to provide emergency pregnancy related care, ensuring timely and appropriate treatment when patients present with serious complications.

Maternal health disparities remain a critical public health issue. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that Hispanic and Black women experience higher rates of severe maternal morbidity than White women, often due to delayed treatment, inadequate emergency response, and systemic barriers within health care settings. Source <https://www.cdc.gov>. Emergency pregnancy complications require immediate care, and gaps in hospital response can have life threatening consequences.

HB 372 clarifies hospital obligations and reinforces standards of care during pregnancy related emergencies. By strengthening accountability and consistency across facilities, the bill helps ensure that patients receive prompt evaluation and treatment regardless of insurance status, language, or background.

Implications for Latino and immigrant Marylanders

For Latina patients, HB 372 expands freedom and safety by affirming the right to emergency care during pregnancy without delay or denial. Clear standards protect patients who may face language barriers or fear engaging with health systems. MLU can amplify the impact of this bill by working with community health organizations to educate families about their rights in emergency settings and by supporting culturally responsive care initiatives that improve maternal health outcomes.

MLU urges the Health and Government Operations Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 372.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Communications and Public Affairs Specialist

Maryland Latinos Unidos

corbejr@mdlatinosunidos.org