



TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Antonio Hayes

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
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DATE: March 5, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – Senate Bill 944 – *Hospitals – Care of Infants After Discharge*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support with amendment** for Senate Bill 944.

The leading cause of death for infants 1 month to 1 year is Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUIDs). This includes sleep related deaths and SIDS. In an effort to reduce the risk of all sleep-related infant deaths, the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) recently updated policy statement and technical report includes new evidence that supports skin-to-skin care for newborn infants; addresses the use of bedside and in-bed sleepers; and adds to recommendations on how to create a safe sleep environment. The AAP is committed to helping guide conversations about safe sleep with families, with the objective of making safe infant sleep the norm.

Senate Bill 944 requires hospitals to provide education and information to families regarding “safe sleep practices” and the importance of providing a “safe sleep” environment for infants prior to discharge. The requirements of Senate Bill 944 do not replace the need for continued education and outreach on safe sleep practices after discharge throughout the first year of life. However, starting that conversation prior to discharge, including providing information on resources available after discharge, will enhance the likelihood that the parents/guardians and other family members will adopt safe sleep practices from day 1 after discharge. Early adoption of safe sleep practices will significantly decrease the likelihood of preventable infant deaths from unsafe sleep practices. MDAAP would suggest however that the bill be amended to ensure there is consistency across all hospitals on how these requirements are implemented. For instance, the form referenced should be the same for all institutions which will require stakeholders and relevant agencies to work together to create a form and define other provisions of the requirements to ensure consistency and uniform implementation.

MDAAP believes that passage of Senate Bill 944, with some structural amendments, will enhance the positive impact of other safe sleep programs that are committed to advancing this important objective. With the need for amendments noted, a favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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