

# **SB0437 MD NARAL SUPPORT FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ehlers, Brittney

Position: FAV



## **SB0437 - Maryland Longitudinal Database System-Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students**

Presented to the Honorable Paul Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 25, 2021 11:00 a.m.

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### **POSITION: SUPPORT**

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee to issue a favorable report on **SB0437 - Maryland Longitudinal Database System - Student Data - Pregnant and Parenting Students**, sponsored by Senator Mary Washington.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. Reproductive justice involves strengthening and expanding supportive environments so pregnant and parenting students can achieve their family formation goals while realizing their educational objective towards economic security. Additionally, both reproductive rights and educational equity movements call for improving the reporting mechanisms that accurately track and monitor the educational outcomes of pregnant and parenting youth, so that the state can continually work towards improvements in policies and practices that protect the rights of this population of students. These students deserve the same opportunity to a rigorous education as their non-parenting peers.

Maryland's public high schools reported a graduation rate of 86.6% in 2019, the lowest rate in recent years, attributing to thousands of students dropping out high school.<sup>1</sup> However, Maryland's public high schools reported that only 49 students formally withdrew during the previous academic year for "pregnancy" or "parenting" reasons.<sup>2</sup> Pregnant and parenting students who do not provide a reason for leaving school were categorized as "whereabouts unknown", of which there were 4,876 students in the 2017-18 school year.<sup>3</sup> This data is inconsistent with national statistics, which show that only 40% of teen mothers finish high school, often leaving due to lack of support systems and resources. Additionally, nationwide, approximately 1/2 of female dropouts, and 1/3 of male dropouts say that becoming a parent was a factor in their decision to leave school.<sup>4</sup> This represents a large percentage of pregnant, expectant, and parenting youth who are dropping out and unreported by school districts. If not appropriately addressed, this number will continue to grow.

With low state graduation rate and the large percentage of high school dropouts, we are concerned that this may indicate that pregnant and parenting youth are not receiving the necessary supports to graduate with their cohort. Establishing an indicator in the Maryland Longitudinal Database System will allow school

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Report Card. 2019 Progress Report.

[https://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/PrintReports/2019/StateReports/English/2019MDReportCard\\_ENG.pdf](https://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/PrintReports/2019/StateReports/English/2019MDReportCard_ENG.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Summary of Attendance for Maryland Public Schools 2017-2018

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<http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DCAA/SSP/20172018Student/2018Attendance.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE). Title IX at 40: Working to Ensure Gender Equity in Education. Washington, DC: NCWGE, 2012. <https://www.ncwge.org/TitleIX40/Pregnant-Parenting.pdf>

districts to specifically note pregnant and parenting status of students in order to record and track their educational outcomes. Data will be collected by school administrators and remain anonymous in the database system, ensuring the privacy of these youth in accurate data collection methods.

Maryland would not be the first state to track this data. The Wisconsin Department of Education received funding through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish an indicator for pregnant and parenting students in schools participating in their project. CDC project staff worked directly with school administrators to collect data that tracked the relationship between pregnant and parenting status and adverse health outcomes and educational fulfillment. While aggregated data was kept anonymous, information was collected via self-reporting from students in the participating school districts. A self-report methodology was utilized to ensure that students felt comfortable in reporting their pregnancy or parenting status to school administrators and ensured that the study did not violate any ethics in data collection. In this study particularly, it is important to note that information was collected on pregnancies rather than births in order to ensure that high-risk vulnerable students were identified in the earlier stages of pregnancy and subsequently able to receive the necessary support and resources.<sup>5</sup> Including pregnancies rather than limiting the data solely to births is essential for Maryland to accurately track the number of pregnant and parenting youth at risk of dropping out and ensuring that anyone in need of resources can receive them as early as possible.

Finally, indicating pregnancy and/or parenting status of students in state reports will allow state and local leaders to continually prioritize policies that identify and address large gaps in educational equity and economic security. It will ensure that all students, regardless of their pregnant or parenting status can achieve their desired educational outcomes and achieve a higher standard of living, rather than feel pressured to drop-out or be pushed out of school.

For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on SB0437**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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<sup>5</sup> Wisconsin Department of Instruction InSPIRE Project. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/school-age-parent/inspire-grant>

# **SB0437 CPMC SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Philip, Diana

Position: FAV

# THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

*Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect.*

Testimony before the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee being heard in  
**SB0437: MARYLAND LONGITUDINAL DATABASE SYSTEM - STUDENT DATA - PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS**

**FEBRUARY 25, 2021**

## **POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children (CPMC) is a consortium of Maryland organizations and individuals formed in 1996 to promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC supports passage of SB0437: Maryland Longitudinal Database System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students.**<sup>1</sup> SB0437 seeks to collect important data about the academic outcomes of these youth to better inform policies and best practices to continue supporting pregnant and parenting youth in their parenting and education goals.

Youth have the same rights as adults in choosing when to form their families. Each year, approximately 800 youth from ages 15 to 17 give birth in Maryland, and roughly another 2,200 among those 18 or 19 years old. In 2017, CPMC was in support of the successful passage of HB0616, that clarified and established excused absences of pregnant and parenting students in public schools for medical and legal reasons, allowing youth to not be mislabeled truant students or neglectful parents. Maryland was the second state in the nation to pass such a law, seeking to help identify and create effective supports to help pregnant and parenting students stay in school, on track to graduate, and headed towards economic security. HB0616 also included the rights of parenting students to miss school without penalty to seek medical care for their children.

SB0437 will expand upon those rights by requiring the state to report on pregnant and parenting status of students in order to better assess the number of parenting youth failing to achieve their education goals, and current reporting mechanisms fail to collect data on this population. Maryland's public high schools reported a graduation rate of 86.6% in 2019, the lowest rate in recent years, attributing to thousands of students dropping out high school.<sup>2</sup> However, Maryland's public high schools reported that only 49 students formally withdrew during the previous academic year for "pregnancy" or "parenting" reasons.<sup>3</sup> Pregnant and parenting students who do not provide a reason for leaving school were categorized as "whereabouts unknown", of which there were 4,876 students in the 2017-18 school year.<sup>4</sup> This represents a large percentage of pregnant, expectant, and parenting youth who are dropping out and unreported by school districts. If not appropriately addressed, this number will continue to grow, further indicating that these vulnerable youth are not receiving the necessary supports to graduate with their cohort and achieve their parenting and education-related goals. If passed, this bill will allow these youth to be both successful parents and students, eliminating the need

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<sup>1</sup> Members in support of position include: Advocates for Children and Youth, Associated Catholic Charities, Baltimore Child Abuse Center (Center for Hope), Child Justice, Inc., Citizens Review Board for Children, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Family Tree, Md Chapter of American Acad. of Pediatrics, Md Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and State Council on Child Abuse and Neglect.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Report Card. 2019 Progress Report.

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for the state to interfere on the basis of child neglect or abuse due to lack of support for balancing parenting responsibilities and full-time coursework.

Pregnant and parenting youth have been found to disproportionately dropout of school in comparison to their non-pregnant and non-parenting peers. Nationally, only 51% of teen mothers receive a high school diploma by age 22 compared to 89% of women who did not become parents in their teens.<sup>5</sup> Hispanic teen mothers have even lower graduation rates, where only 34% receive a high school diploma, the lowest percentage of any racial group.<sup>6</sup> Those who have lower education attainment are more likely to be unemployed, less likely to accumulate higher household wealth, and face worse health outcomes in comparison to their peers.<sup>7</sup>

With low state graduation rate and the large percentage of high school dropouts, we are concerned that this may indicate that pregnant and parenting youth are not receiving the necessary supports to graduate with their cohort. Establishing an indicator in the Maryland Longitudinal Database System will allow school districts to specifically note pregnant and parenting status of students in order to record and track their educational outcomes. Data will be collected by school administrators and remain anonymous in the database system, ensuring the privacy of these youth in accurate data collection methods.

Maryland would not be the first state to track this data. The Wisconsin Department of Education received funding through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish an indicator for pregnant and parenting students in schools participating in their project. CDC project staff worked directly with school administrators to collect data that tracked the relationship between pregnant and parenting status and adverse health outcomes and educational fulfillment. While aggregated data was kept anonymous, information was collected via self-reporting from students in the participating school districts. A self-report methodology was utilized to ensure that students felt comfortable in reporting their pregnancy or parenting status to school administrators and ensured that the study did not violate any ethics in data collection. In this study particularly, it is important to note that information was collected on pregnancies rather than births in order to ensure that high-risk vulnerable students were identified in the earlier stages of pregnancy and subsequently able to receive the necessary support and resources.<sup>8</sup> Including pregnancies rather than limiting the data solely to births is essential for Maryland to accurately track the number of pregnant and parenting youth at risk of dropping out and ensuring that anyone in need of resources can receive them as early as possible.

Maryland youth, regardless of pregnancy or parenting status, should have full accessibility to existing resources to assist them in completing their education and be the best caregivers to their children as possible.

For these reasons, the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children urges the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee a *favorable* report on **SB0437: Maryland Longitudinal Database System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students.**

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<sup>5</sup> Perper K, Peterson K, Manlove J. 2010. Diploma Attainment among Teen Mothers. Child Trends Research Brief. No. 2010-01.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Wisconsin Department of Instruction InSPIRE Project. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/school-age-parent/inspire-grant>

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Position: FAV



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For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on SB0437**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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<sup>5</sup> Wisconsin Department of Instruction InSPIRE Project. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/school-age-parent/inspire-grant>

# **SB0437 Sign On Letter Favorable.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Philip, Diana

Position: FAV

**SB0437 - Maryland Longitudinal Database System-Student Data  
– Pregnant and Parenting Students**

Presented to the Hon. Paul Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 25, 2021 11:00 a.m.

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

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Dear Hon. Paul Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

Thank you for the work of the Maryland General Assembly in its dedication to improving the educational outcomes for Maryland's youth and its commitment to students having equal opportunity to the same rigorous curriculum across all populations throughout our state.

We are writing today to express our support of HB0359/SB0437 because of the immediate need to track the educational outcomes of pregnant and parenting youth in Maryland's public schools. This bill will allow the state to accurately monitor the number of pregnant and parenting students achieving high school diplomas and to assess the number of youth being pushed out of school due to what students too often find are unwelcoming and unsupportive school climates, derailing progress in realizing educational goals and economic security.

According to aggregated data collected between 2011 and 2017, 11 counties in Maryland have teen birth rates higher than the national average with Baltimore City and Dorchester County having rates over twice as high. There were 2,645 births to teenagers under the age of 19 in the state in 2018. However, there is a large discrepancy in the reported dropout rate due to pregnancy or parenting status. Maryland's public schools reported that 49 students formally withdrew from school during the 2017-2018 academic year for "pregnancy" or "parenting" reasons, while nationwide, approximately only 40% of teen mothers finish high school. Pregnant and parenting students who do not provide a reason for leaving school may be categorized "whereabouts unknown", of which there were 4,876 students in the 2017-18 school year. This shows a dramatic discrepancy in data collection and reporting.

As a result, it is clear that school systems are inadequately prepared to support this student population and have failed to accurately represent the reasons students drop out of school.

This bill will directly address this gap in data collection and analysis by including pregnant and parenting student status in the Maryland Longitudinal Database System, allowing the state to track and assess the number of students receiving the essential support to achieve positive educational outcomes.

We are signing onto this letter because it is essential that the state begins accurately collecting information on educational outcomes for pregnant and parenting students. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Joel Spielberger, ACLU of MD

Ashley Black, Public Justice Center

Melissa Rock, Advocates for Children and Youth

Michelle Siri, Women's Law Center of Maryland

C.R. Valeriann, Baltimore NOW

Jeannette Feldner, Montgomery Country NOW

Sandy Bell, Maryland NOW

Shamoya Gardiner, Strong Schools Maryland

Rick Tyler, Maryland Education Coalition

Rachelle Ciulla, Doula and SSPH Candidate, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Health

# **Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB437.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sheahan, Molly

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**February 25, 2021**

**Senate Bill 437**

**Maryland Longitudinal Data System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students**

**Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee**

**Position: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington, which together encompass over one million Marylanders.

**Senate Bill 437** would include data regarding how many students are or have been pregnant or parenting in the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center. The Center would then collect, aggregate, report and analyze this data while preserving the privacy of the students.

The Maryland Catholic Conference supports SB 437 because it will record data reflecting the needs of student mothers and fathers to continue their education. Many pregnant and parenting students experience discrimination, lag behind their peers in educational achievement or drop out of school. Educational achievement affects the lifetime income of teen mothers: two-thirds of families started by teens are poor, and nearly one in four will depend on welfare within three years of a child's birth. (*Teen Pregnancy Rates Affects Graduation Rates. National Council on State Legislatures, 2013.*)

Research has also demonstrated a strong link between parents' educational level and children's well-being: Children with more educated parents tend to have better cognitive skills and higher academic achievement than children with less educated parents (*Pew Research Center 2013*). Given the importance of education for pregnant and parenting teens, it is surprising that so little is known about what it takes to encourage, prepare, and support these adolescents.

Too often a student mother or father is forced to choose between their child and their dreams for educational attainment. Collecting good data on pregnant and parent students in high school will help Maryland and the General Assembly learn more about what the unique challenges of these students and what it takes to encourage, prepare, and support these adolescents.

It is for these reasons that the Conference asks for a favorable report of **Senate Bill 437**. Thank you for your consideration.

# **Mary Washington Written Testimony SB437.pdf**

Uploaded by: Washington, Mary

Position: FAV

MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D

Legislative District 43

Baltimore City

Education, Health, and  
Environmental Affairs Committee

*Chair*

Joint Committee on Ending  
Homelessness

*Chair*

Joint Committee on Children,  
Youth, and Families



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SUPPORT – SB 437**

**Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Student Data - Pregnant and  
Parenting Students**

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 25, 2021

Testimony of Senator Mary Washington

Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully urge you to vote favorable on Senate Bill 437, which is a companion bill to SB438.

This bill adds a de-identified data marker for pregnant and parenting youth to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System in accordance with all predetermined privacy standards. This will allow school districts to specifically note pregnant and parenting status of students in order to record and track their educational outcomes. Data will be collected by school administrators and remain anonymous in the database system, ensuring the privacy of these youth in accurate data collection methods.

SB437 will help inform policy decisions that identify and address large gaps in educational equity and economic security. It will also analyze the long-term successes and challenges of parenting students to ensure that these students can achieve their desired educational outcomes and achieve a higher standard of living.

For these reasons, I ask you for a favorable report on SB437.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Washington".

Senator Mary Washington, District 43, Baltimore City

**SB437.INFORMATIONAL.MDRTL.LBogley.pdf**

Uploaded by: Bogley, Laura

Position: INFO



## Informational Statement SB437

### Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Student Data - Pregnant and Parenting Students

By Laura Bogley, JD

Director of Legislation, Maryland Right to Life

**On behalf of our members across the state, we submit the following information regarding SB437. We applaud any effort to help create an educational environment that supports pregnant students in their decisions to parent their children or utilize adoption services. Data collection is an important tool, but this bill does not ensure that data will be collected and reported in a non-biased manner. As written, this bill will serve as a public subsidy for the abortion industry that is interested in this data for their particular use as *market analysis*, to justify their “reproductive health” programs and services to sell back to the state.**

#### Title IX Includes Abortion

This bill is supported by the **National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL)** and builds upon ongoing incremental legislation to expand comprehensive reproductive health access to students in Maryland schools. Federal Title IX amendments already protect the rights of pregnant students in education and extend those rights to cover the *termination of pregnancy* or abortion. The data solicited through this bill will be used to require school systems to develop and implement policies and commit public resources towards expanding abortion to minor children, including providing contracts to abortion advocates and providers for curriculum, professional development training, school-based health clinic operations, the remote prescription of chemical abortion pills, and transportation to offsite reproductive healthcare providers including abortion providers.

#### No Public Subsidies to Two-Billion Dollar Abortion Industry

As a result of the state authorizing and subsidizing the abortion industry to have direct access to our schoolchildren over the last 40 years, the number of abortions has INCREASED not decreased. In their 2020 annual report Planned Parenthood reports committing an all-time high number of abortions (354,871 or 972 abortions daily). Their prenatal care and adoption referrals both dropped double digits from the previous year. Planned Parenthood commits 41 abortions for every one prenatal care service and 133 abortions for every adoption referral.

The Supreme Court has held that the alleged constitutional “right” to an abortion “*implies no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*” A January 2021 Marist poll showed that 58% of people oppose the use of tax dollars to pay for abortion.

#### Love them Both

Pregnant teens do not need to choose between their education and the life of their child and 47 years of legal abortion has not solved the underlying problems that pregnant women face. 83% of Americans polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children. Public funds should not be *diverted from* but *prioritized for* health and family planning services which have the objective of *saving the lives* of both mothers and children, including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care, parenting classes, foster care reform and affordable adoption programs.

**For these reasons, we respectfully request that you ensure that any taxpayer funded data collection or reporting for the purpose of providing education and services to pregnant youth, be produced utilizing effective and ethical state oversight, and be fully inclusive to provide equal access and participation of representatives with a demonstrated pro-life perspective. Thank you for your consideration.**

# **SB 437 - LOI - Education – Maryland Longitudinal D**

Uploaded by: Hands, Zachary

Position: INFO



**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Schools

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<b>BILL:</b>	Senate Bill 437	<b>DATE:</b>	February 25, 2021
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Education – Maryland Longitudinal Data System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students	<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
<b>POSITION:</b>	Information Only		
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Zachary Hands 410-767-0504 (Annapolis) <a href="mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov">Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov</a>		

#### **EXPLANATION:**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding SB 437 – Maryland Longitudinal Data System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students. The Bill changes the information that constitutes “student data” in the MLDS so that it includes information as to whether students are parenting a child or are/have ever been pregnant.

This information is not currently collected, and students are not obligated to report it. Some students may seek an excused absence for appointments relating to pregnancy or parenting, thus reporting to the school their status. MSDE does not expect this type of self-report to be accurate, resulting almost certainly in an undercount in the MLDS data set. Students have privacy rights and do not have to report to any school personnel if they are or have been pregnant or are parenting a child. Furthermore, a minor in Maryland may seek reproductive health care services without parental consent, adding significantly to the challenge of collecting the data.

The statute creating the MLDS specifically prohibits obtaining individual student information from medical records. SB 437 would create an exception in this provision, enabling the collection of information from medical records regarding medical services, such as prenatal care and abortions. However, this may conflict with Maryland’s Minor Consent Laws, and with federal regulations that require patient consent to access data in medical records.

In Federal regulations, the HIPAA Privacy Rule—the federal medical confidentiality regulations issued in 2002 under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act—protects the health care information of adolescents and young adults. The HIPAA privacy protections for young adults are the same as for other adults. They are entitled to access their protected health information and to control the disclosure of that information in some circumstances. Additional specific requirements apply to the information of adolescents who are minors.

SB 437 – Maryland Longitudinal Data System – Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 25, 2021

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) names pregnant women as a protected class.

Pregnant women are not required to disclose a pregnancy until it will impact their work. Due to these protections and laws, counselors and nurses in schools work under the presumption of confidentiality in providing services.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 437**. For further information, please contact Zachary Hands, at 410-767-0504, or [Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov).

# **SB 437 MHEC Letter of Information 02252021.pdf**

Uploaded by: Towers, Lee

Position: INFO



**Larry Hogan**  
Governor

**Boyd K. Rutherford**  
Lt. Governor

**Andrew R. Smarick**  
Chair

**James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.**  
Secretary

**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 437

**Position:** Letter of Information

**Title:** Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Student Data – Pregnant and Parenting Students

**Committee:** Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

**Hearing Date:** February 25, 2021

**Bill Summary:**

Senate Bill 437 would include data on pregnant and parenting students in the data collected, organized, managed, disaggregated, reported on, and analyzed by the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center; and altering the types of records excluded from the definition of “student data” for purposes of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System.

**Position:**

Senate Bill 437 alters the definition of “student data” -- for the purposes of Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center -- to include data on whether a student is or has been pregnant or is a parenting student. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has no intent to collect this information from postsecondary institutions; it is MHEC’s understanding that Senate Bill 437 is directly related to House Bill 401, which establishes new policies for the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regarding pregnant or parenting students and not adult pregnant students or parents attending institutions of higher education. Again, MHEC has no intent to collect this information from postsecondary institutions.

For further information, contact Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, at [Emily.dow@maryland.gov](mailto:Emily.dow@maryland.gov).