



Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 891 – Public Health – Maternal and Child Mortality – Review and Perinatal Hospice Services – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (“the Board”) respectfully submits this letter of support for Senate Bill (SB) 891 – Public Health – Maternal and Child Mortality – Review and Perinatal Hospice Services. This bill authorizes the State Child Fatality Review Team and Maternal Mortality Review Program to enter into a certain agreement with an entity for certain storage of data and requires the agreement to provide certain protection and address certain issues. This bill further authorizes a physician or nurse practitioner who diagnoses an unborn child as having a certain anomaly to inform the pregnant woman in a certain manner of certain services, offer or refer the pregnant woman for certain services, and provide to the pregnant woman a certain information sheet. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Health is required to develop a certain list of certain perinatal hospice programs, and publish on its website certain information and a certain list.

The Board believes this bill to be beneficial to Marylanders by allowing the State Child Fatality Review Team and Maternal Mortality Review Program to safely and respectfully collect data. The collected data has a strong potential to improve maternal care and perinatal standards within the industry. Evidence-based medicine is crucial and exemplified within the practice of nursing. Data supports the adoption of best practices, which in turn are implemented into policy and procedures conducted by health care practitioners. Due to the sensitive nature of perinatal hospice care, it is crucial to collect, protect, analyze and publish up-to-date data to inform policy and practice changes.

Additionally, the role of a nurse practitioner is critical within the scope of perinatal hospice care. Nurses are taught to not only provide holistic care addressing the physical needs of a pregnant woman, but also to create and foster a supporting and understanding environment. After a nurse practitioner diagnoses lethal fetal anomalies, it is greatly encouraged that the appropriate services and information are provided to the pregnant woman.

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing respectfully submits this letter of support for SB 891.

I hope this information is useful. For more information, please contact Iman Farid, Health Policy Analyst, at (410) 585 – 1536 (iman.farid@maryland.gov) or Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) 585 – 1953 (rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Hicks", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Gary N. Hicks
Board President

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.