



TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair
Members, House Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Wanika Fisher

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: January 26, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 235 – *Correctional Services – Pregnant Incarcerated Individuals – Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment*

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Maryland Section, which represents the Maryland physicians who serve the obstetrical and gynecological needs of Maryland women and their families, **supports** House Bill 235.

House Bill 235 requires that substance use disorder screening and treatment be offered to pregnant individuals who are incarcerated. The legislation also provides requirements for ensuring that pregnant individuals are connected to the health resources that they need upon release.

Incarcerated individuals who are pregnant should have access to the services needed to maintain a healthy pregnancy. Substance use disorder treatment, including medication assisted treatment, is essential for those individuals with such disorders. However, it is not always available in correctional facilities and local detention centers. Passage of House Bill 235 will help address these access challenges by ensuring that these services are available to pregnant individuals. Further, the legislation also addresses the important issue of ensuring that individuals can identify health care resources in their communities upon release to avoid gaps in care that could place the patient at risk. Continuity of care is particularly important for those suffering from substance use disorders.

Passage of House Bill 235 will ensure that pregnant incarcerated individuals receive the care they need to maintain a health pregnancy and increase the likelihood of a positive birth outcome. It will also serve to enhance the long-term health of the individual and their newborn. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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