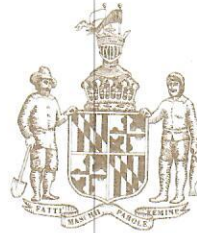


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—
Finance Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

—
Legislative Policy Committee



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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 1, 2022

The Honorable Delores Kelley,
Finance Committee

Senate Bill 242 – Maryland Department of Health – System for Newborn Screening - Requirements

Dear Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 242 requires the Department of Health Newborn Screening Program to screen for each condition listed in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Recommended Uniform Screening Panel.

The Newborn Screening Program is a statewide system for screening all newborn infants in Maryland for certain hereditary and congenital disorders associated with severe problems of health or development. This ensures that all newborns in Maryland receive the most updated, comprehensive medical attention they deserve from the very beginning of their lives.

Currently in Maryland, when babies are born, unless the parents choose to opt-out, they receive the benefit of a newborn screening test as part of the State's universal newborn screening program. It is a special test that is used to test babies for certain serious medical conditions in order to identify babies who have specific disorders before they get sick, helping them to get treatment as soon as possible. It does not test for everything – only 50 conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe immunodeficiency disorders, the presence of abnormal red blood cells or sickle cell disease and more.

Maryland develops its list of disorders from the federal Recommended Uniform Screening Panel that is developed by the US Health and Human Services Department. The recommendations is a list of disorders that HHS recommends for states to screen as part of their newborn screening program; however each state utilizes its own discretion on what to screen for, while others screen for additional disorders.

I have submitted amendments in file to clarify that Senate Bill 242 will only apply to core conditions listed on the panel rather than to both core and secondary conditions. This will align Maryland with six other states that have passed similar legislation.

I request a favorable vote on Senate Bill 242.