



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

February 16, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 765 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Doula Program – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 765 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Doula Program. HB 765 will codify Medicaid reimbursement of certified doula services during pregnancy, labor, birth, and postpartum.

The Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) committed \$8 million in annual funding through fiscal year 2025 under the Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS). The funding will be used to support Medicaid initiatives to reduce the severe maternal morbidity rate and pediatric asthma. MDH committed to using a portion of the HSCRC money to cover doula services for all Medicaid participants and offset the state general fund impact. Additionally, funding through Medicaid will create the opportunity to receive federal match funding to nearly double the investment. MDH submitted regulations for doula services with an expected *Maryland Register* publication date in late February 2022.

HB 765 has the same participation qualifications, reimbursement rates, and provider scope as MDH's planned implementation for doula services. However, this bill will limit MDH's ability to make any necessary adjustments to coverage for doula services, based on the information and data gained over the next several years, outside of the legislative cycle.

MDH stands committed to reducing the maternal morbidity rate in the State. In collaboration with HSCRC through SIHIS, these initiatives will help support pregnant and postpartum women and improve health outcomes.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Shek, Director of Governmental Affairs, at heather.shek@maryland.gov or (443) 695-4218.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary