Montgomery County
Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550   **ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270**

HB 1080   **DATE: March 2, 2022**

SPONSOR: Delegate Peña-Melnyk

ASSIGNED TO: Health and Government Operations

CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey   (leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Children and Pregnant Women (Healthy Babies Equity Act)

House Bill 1080 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) to provide comprehensive medical care and other health care services to noncitizen pregnant women who would otherwise qualify for Medicaid except for their immigration status and their children up to age one.

Montgomery County believes that the women and children who would be served by House Bill 1080 should have access to health care, particularly during pregnancy. Babies of mothers who do not get prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die than those born to mothers who do get care.[1] Montgomery County has been providing County-funded health care services to low-income, uninsured pregnant women and children through our Maternity Partnership Program and Care for Kids Program for decades. Through public-private partnerships, the County programs provide primary health care services for low-income uninsured, children, adults, pregnant women and the homeless, using private pediatricians, a network of safety net clinics, obstetricians, and hospitals along with other health care providers. House Bill 1080 would provide similar medical care and other services to pregnant residents and their children across the state.

Montgomery County government has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring noncitizen County residents have had access to health care through tremendous investment of County funds; we strongly encourage the State to make similar health care available to women and children across Maryland. Montgomery County urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1080.

---

[1] Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Prenatal Care.* Accessed 28 February 2022: https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/prenatal-care