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**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill Number:** HB 1080 Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Children and Pregnant Women (Healthy Babies Equity Act)

**Hearing Date:** March 1, 2022

**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) strongly supports *House Bill 1080 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Children and Pregnant Women*. The bill provides Medicaid coverage for pregnant women who would otherwise be ineligible because of immigration status.

Maryland Medicaid covers dental services for women throughout pregnancy and the postpartum period. This bill will significantly improve access to dental services for pregnant women among immigrant communities. Access to dental services is critical for both the health of the mother and infant. Children are more likely to have dental caries if their caregivers, including mothers, have poor dental health.<sup>i, ii</sup> We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> Smith RE, Badner VN, Morse DE, Freeman K (2002). Maternal risk indicators for childhood caries in an inner city population. *Community Dental Oral Epidemiology* 30:176-181.

<sup>ii</sup> Bedos C, Brodeur JM, Arpin S, Nicolau B (2005). Dental caries experience: a two-generational study.

***Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders***