



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: House Bill 626 – Pregnant Person’s Freedom Act

Hearing Date: March 11, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) strongly supports *House Bill 626 – Pregnant Person’s Freedom Act*. The bill protects individuals from prosecution for acts that would not have been criminalized if they were not pregnant.

ACNM’s strong support of this bill is because people will delay or forego prenatal care if they are afraid of prosecution or administrative penalties. ACNM joins other major health professional organizations in opposing the criminalization of acts during pregnancy. These organizations include: the American Medical Association, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists, American Academy of Family Practitioners, American Society of Addiction Medicine, American Public Health Association, American Nurses Association, and American Academy of Pediatrics.ⁱ

In a statement issued by ACNM National:

“ACNM supports a health care system in which individuals with SUD in pregnancy are treated with compassion, not punishment. Patients should not be deterred from seeking care during pregnancy due to fear of prosecution. Optimal care for patients with addiction occurs within a multidisciplinary environment in which holistic care is provided that considers the context of social environment and unique health risks. In the health policy and legislative arena, efforts should be directed toward comprehensive approaches to promoting addiction recovery.”ⁱⁱ

We ask for a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ <https://www.nationaladvocatesforpregnantwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/June-2021-Updated-Fact-Sheet-Medical-and-Public-Health-Group-Statements-Opposing-Prosecution-and-Punishment-of-Pregnant-Women-.docx-1.pdf>

ⁱⁱ American College of Nurse-Midwives Position Statement, Substance Use Disorders in Pregnancy (updated 2018)