



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 6, 2023

To: The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair, House Health & Government Operations Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 717- State Board of Nursing – Peer Advisory Committees, Scopes of Practice, and Licensure Requirements

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 717. Maryland hospitals supported legislation in 2021 to create a pathway to licensure for certified midwives (CM). These trained professionals take the same graduate coursework and must pass the same board certification exam as certified nurse midwives (CNM). When CMs and CNMs work with obstetricians and gynecologists (OB/GYNs), they optimize care delivery.¹

HB 717 ensures CMs are part of appropriate work groups within the Board of Nursing and have the ability to administer starter dosages of medications like CNMs can. The bill also requires the Maryland Department of Health to convene stakeholders to develop recommendations to expand access to birthing services in birthing centers. We respectfully ask to be included in this work group. Many hospitals historically had relationships with birthing centers, and the majority of births in the state occur at hospitals. Maryland hospitals are committed to improving maternal and child health outcomes. In 2021, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation approved Maryland's State Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS), which is "a fundamental component of the [Maryland Total Cost of Care Model](#)."² SIHIS includes total population health goals to address maternal and child health.³ The state committed to lower severe maternal morbidity 19% by 2026, focusing on closing the racial gap by reducing the Black Non-Hispanic rate by 20%.^{4,5}

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on HB 717.

For more information, please contact:
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¹ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (April, 2018). "[Joint Statement of Practice Relations Between Obstetrician-Gynecologists and Certified Nurse-Midwives/Certified Midwives](#)".

² Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation. (March 17, 2021). "[Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy Proposal](#)".

³ Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission. (May, 2021). "[Final Recommendation on Use of Maternal and Child Health Funding](#)".

⁴ Kaiser Family Foundation. (n.d.). "[State Facts: Births Financed by Medicaid](#)".

⁵ Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission. (December 14, 2020). "[Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy Proposal](#)".