



House Appropriations Committee  
March 5, 2025

House Bill 840 – *Public Senior Higher Education Institutions – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Plan Requirements (Pregnant and Parenting Student Support Act)*

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

On behalf of the Maryland Section of The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we submit this letter of support for House Bill 840.

House Bill 840 seeks to address the issues that students who are pregnant, have recently given birth, or are non-birth parents face in attempting to advance their education, while addressing the demands associated with pregnancy and early parenthood demands. House Bill 840 requires higher education institutions to adopt policies related to pregnant and parenting students that is consistent with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which includes a prohibition of a requirement for pregnant students to take a leave of absence; allows pregnant students, students who have recently given birth, and non-birth parents to take a leave of absence and return in good academic standing; and requires the adoption of policies related to pregnancy discrimination awareness and other issues that impact pregnant students. The bill also requires the policy to include requirements for referrals to on-campus and off-campus services regarding the availability of or eligibility for government assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Childcare Scholarship Program, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program as well as referrals to on-campus and off-campus health care service providers.

Academic success is a key factor in enabling students to become productive, self-sufficient individuals who can advance professionally and personally. The added challenges of pregnancy and the initial months after delivery can negatively impact a student, despite a desire and commitment to complete their education and advance their professional development. Passage of House Bill 840 will help ensure that institutions of higher education have policies that support the success and advancement of their students who experience a pregnancy or birth of a child. It will enhance the likelihood of success for these students as well as their ability to support their families. A favorable report is requested.

**For more information call:**

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