

ARTHUR ELLIS, CPA
Legislative District 28
Charles County

DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

Vice Chair, Rules Committee

Senate Chair

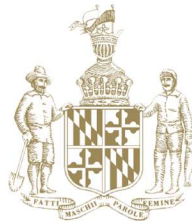
Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on
Workers' Compensation Benefit and
Insurance Oversight

Senate Chair, Charles County Delegation

Chair, Select Committee Southern
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Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am honored to present Senate Bill 0019, legislation establishing the Maryland Commission on Women's Health Advancement.

Despite Maryland's progress in health system innovation, women across the State continue to experience persistent and unacceptable disparities in access to care, quality of services, and health outcomes. These disparities impact not only the health and well-being of individual women, but also have far-reaching consequences for their families and the broader community. When women face obstacles to accessing quality health care—whether due to limited insurance coverage, lack of transportation, language barriers, or a shortage of culturally competent providers—the ripple effects extend to children, partners, and caregivers. Missed or delayed appointments can lead to preventable complications, higher rates of chronic illness, and greater maternal and infant mortality. In addition, women in underserved areas are more likely to forego preventive screenings, mental health support, and specialty care, further widening the gap in health outcomes.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that not only expands access to care, but also strengthens health education, builds trust within communities, and invests in the recruitment and retention of diverse health professionals. This bill seeks to lay the groundwork for these systemic changes, ensuring that all women—regardless of geography, income, or background—have the opportunity to achieve optimal health and well-being throughout their lives. Beyond its immediate objectives, Senate Bill 0019 has broader implications for Maryland's health care system. The Commission's work has the potential to strengthen care coordination, enhance data-driven decision-making, improve integration across health systems, and promote sustainable financing models for women's health services. By examining both centralized and network-based approaches, the legislation ensures that Maryland considers innovative and cost-effective solutions that maximize impact while minimizing duplication and inefficiency. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 0019.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arthur Ellis".

Arthur Ellis, CPA