

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



**HB1118 — Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations –
Perinatal Mental Health Conditions
House Health Committee
March 13, 2026**

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to educate and promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report on HB1118 — Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations – Perinatal Mental Health Conditions.**

Perinatal mental health conditions affect a significant number of Maryland families. Without early screening and appropriate care, these conditions can have profound and lasting effects on maternal wellbeing, infant development, family stability, and overall public health outcomes. Our coalition recognize the importance of addressing mental health indicators as way to help encourage maternal bonding and attachment in infancy as a tactic in preventing child maltreatment.

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders are among the most common complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Early screening is proven to improve detection, facilitate timely intervention, and reduce long-term negative outcomes for both parent and child. Ensuring that screening is covered by insurance and supported by public health infrastructure removes barriers that many Maryland families currently face when seeking care. At the same time, enhancing provider education builds systemic capacity to respond effectively to these needs across the state.

By investing in prevention, early detection, and provider training, SB0891 supports stronger families and healthier children, improves maternal health outcomes, and can reduce health disparities across communities. The legislation will require coverage for perinatal mental health screenings at key points in care including prenatal visits, postpartum care, and well-child visits in the first year of life thereby ensuring that families have access to appropriate assessment without undue financial barriers. The Maryland Department of Health will establish a statewide perinatal mental health condition screening program with standardized, culturally appropriate tools to support early identification and referral and health care professionals will have access to continuing education on perinatal mental health, which improves recognition and treatment of these conditions.

It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on HB1118 — Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations – Perinatal Mental Health Conditions.**¹

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include – the American Academy of Pediatrics - Maryland Chapter, Child Justice, Center for Hope, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA - Baltimore County), The Family Tree, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, National Association of Social Workers – MD (NASW), the State Council on Child Abuse & Neglect (SCCAN), and individual members of the coalition.

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children

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