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**HEALTH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY UNIT**

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March 23, 2026

To: The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair  
Health Committee

From: Irnise F. Williams, Deputy Director, Health Education and Advocacy Unit

Re: Senate Bill 0169 - Health Insurance - Hospitals - Emergency Pregnancy-Related  
Medical Conditions - Procedures

The Office of the Attorney General's Health Education and Advocacy Unit (HEAU) supports SB169, which codifies into Maryland law key provisions of the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) as they relate to emergency pregnancy-related medical conditions. Recent litigation and policy shifts by the federal government have weakened clarity around EMTALA, especially for emergency care involving pregnancy and abortion.

This bill removes ambiguity and ensures that hospitals with emergency departments provide necessary care when a patient presents with an emergency pregnancy-related medical condition. Specifically, hospitals must screen for, treat, and stabilize emergency medical conditions, including through the provision of or referral for pregnancy termination services when needed.

This bill also prohibits hospitals from taking adverse actions against providers who (1) treat patients consistent with the medical standards of care, that in the provider's clinical judgment, were necessary to stabilize the patient, or (2) do not transfer an unstable patient. It also protects employees who report violations.

This legislation preserves access to lifesaving emergency care for pregnant patients, even if federal enforcement of EMTALA changes. By codifying these EMTALA provisions at the state level, legislators can ensure clear, enforceable medical screening, stabilization, and transfer protections, protect providers from conflicting directives, and uphold the equitable treatment of all emergency patients.

We urge a favorable report.