



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

March 13, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Chair, House Health Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 1118 – Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations - Perinatal Mental Health Conditions – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Bagnall and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 1118 – Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations - Perinatal Mental Health Conditions. HB 1118 requires coverage for perinatal mental health screenings, directs the Department to establish a screening program, and mandates continuing education on perinatal mental health conditions for certain health care providers.

The Department supports the bill's goal of increasing access to perinatal mental health screening for pregnant and postpartum people through improved insurance coverage and provider education. Standing referrals created by this bill will make it easier for individuals with possible perinatal mental health conditions to obtain appropriate, timely, and cost-efficient care. Because substance use disorder and overdose have been the leading causes of pregnancy-associated death in Maryland for the past eight years, the bill's inclusion of substance use within the definition of perinatal mental health - and the requirement for associated screening - is critical.¹

Perinatal mental health screenings are already reimbursed by the Medical Assistance (Medicaid) Program and maternal depression screening is also included as part of EPSDT services. Further access to robust, high-quality perinatal mental health screening and treatment services is fundamental to a health care system that ensures that every birth is safe and to promote wellbeing for all birthing people.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Lynch, Director of Governmental Affairs at meghan.lynch@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D.
Secretary of Health

¹ Maryland Department of Health. Maryland Maternal Mortality Review. 2022.
<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch/Documents/MMR/2022%20MMR%20Report.pdf>