

SHANEKA HENSON
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Anne Arundel County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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**SB0656 – Public Health – Cosmetic Products
Enforcement and Penalties for Prohibited Ingredients
(Crown and Care Act)**

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison and committee members.

For the record, I am Shaneka Henson, representing District 30 in Anne Arundel County; and am here today to urge a favorable committee vote on Senate Bill SB0656 – Public Health – Cosmetic Products – Enforcement and Penalties for Prohibited Ingredients (Crown and Care Act) which accepts the approved amendments in HB1533 to:

- include lead among the listed prohibited chemicals and
- has the Maryland Department of Health, rather than the Office of the Attorney General, administer the fund.

Additionally, the conformed bill will:

- require that the identified fund be renamed the “Restoration Fund” instead of the “Restitution Fund” to better reflect its intended purpose; and
- strike the current language outlining fund distribution and instead include language directing the OAG and MDH to jointly adopt regulations governing administration of the Restoration Fund, including authorization to use a portion of the fund for administrative purposes if existing resources are insufficient.

The intent of this legislation is to protect women from harmful chemicals produce in numerous hair products and ensure real accountability for consumer safety.

In 2025, Maryland took a major step by banning several dangerous chemicals in cosmetic products, including formaldehyde, phthalates, parabens, mercury, and PFAS. However, these toxic products remain on store shelves due to limited enforcement and accountability.

The Crown & Care Act closes this enforcement gap by strengthening the Attorney General’s authority to investigate violations, pursue civil penalties and restitution, and ensures that consumers harmed by illegal products have meaningful legal remedies.

A vital component in the legislation is establishing a restitution and research fund to support medical screening, treatment, and research related to fibroids, uterine cancer, hair loss, and other related conditions disproportionately affecting Black women.

This legislation is supported by a broad and growing coalition of public health advocates, medical professionals, consumer protection leaders, and community organizations committed to advancing health equity and consumer safety. In fact, many of these chemicals are already banned or restricted in the European Union yet remain widely available in US products.

In support of the house bill and these additional changes to strengthen its enactment, your favorable vote on the conformed bill would bring powerful visibility to this effort and help ensure meaningful public health protection for future generations.

Sincerely

Shaneka Henson, Senator