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MAYOR

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HB1131

March 5, 2026

TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 1131 – Public Health - Pregnancy Loss - Prohibited Actions (Pregnancy Outcome Protection Act)

POSITION: Favorable

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** HB 1131.

This bill will protect people who experience a pregnancy loss from being subject to investigation, civil liability, or criminal prosecution related to that pregnancy loss. The bill will also establish similar protections for health care providers and health care facilities.

Pregnant people in Baltimore City experience higher rates of maternal mortality, overdose, and other dangers associated with childbearing than pregnant people in other areas around the state and country.^{i,iii,iii} Now, in addition to health challenges, pregnant people are at risk of legal challenges in the wake of the *Dobbs* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Hundreds of people around the country have been arrested and charged with crimes related to pregnancy and birth, with dozens of cases involving pregnancy loss.^{iv}

Though these cases are happening in other states, Marylanders could still be at risk due to a lack of clear law regarding pregnancy loss. Maryland has no statutes specific to the issue and our case law is inconsistent when considering what charges could apply to someone who loses a pregnancy.^v Amid the recent surge in the limitation and criminalization of pregnancy care, Marylanders – including pregnant people, their families, and clinicians – need a countervailing force to safeguard their wellbeing. HB 1131 provides an important piece of the structural defense necessary to protect against threats to our city's residents.

As such, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 1131.

ⁱ Hoyert DL. Maternal mortality rates in the United States, 2020. NCHS Health E-Stats. 2022.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc:113967>

ⁱⁱ KFF. (2023). Maryland Maternal & Infant Health Data. Retrieved from <https://www.kff.org/interactive/womens-health-profiles/maryland/maternal-infant-health/>

ⁱⁱⁱ B'more for Healthy Babies. (2025). <https://www.healthybabiesbaltimore.com/data>

^{iv} Pregnancy Justice. (2025). Pregnancy as a Crime. Retrieved from <https://www.pregnancyjusticeus.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Pregnancy-as-a-Crime-An-Interim-Update-on-the-First-Two-Years-After-Dobbs.pdf>

^v Pregnancy Justice. (2026). After Pregnancy Loss. Retrieved from <https://www.pregnancyjusticeus.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/After-Pregnancy-Loss.pdf>